

2024 PROCEEDINGS



NATIONAL
SYMPOSIUM
ON JUVENILE SERVICES
COURAGE TO CHANGE

SALT LAKE CITY UTAH

National Partnership for Juvenile Services

Conference Organizers

Abby Schrum, Pennsylvania

Licia Lentz, Ed.D., Pennsylvania

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 2024 NATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON JUVENILE SERVICES

October 30 - November 1, 2024

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Welcome

The 2024 National Symposium on Juvenile Services brings together field experts from across the nation to share innovative program services and real-life solutions to common barriers throughout the continuum of care.

The National Partnership for Juvenile Services is proud to be hosting the 2024 Symposium in collaboration with the Utah Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, the Utah State Courts, the U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), and the OJJDP Center for Youth Justice Transformation (CYTJ).

Building on previous years, the theme of the 2024 Symposium is Courage to Change. The following topic areas will be the focus;

Improving Systems: Shaping organizational culture through sound policy and practice.

Improving Personnel Performance: Recruiting, training, and retaining quality professionals.

Improving Youth, Family and Community Outcomes: Promoting Innovative Strategies to Support Positive Youth Development.

Improving Access to Resources: Addressing needs of youth with complex mental, physical, and/or other behavioral health needs through cross-system collaboration.

Implementation of Performance Improvement Practices: Demonstrating compliance with local/state/federal mandates.

The Symposium is held in conjunction with NPJS' National Leadership Institute. The Symposium and Leadership Institute will include networking and social opportunities to encourage attendees to establish lasting connections with a broad community of colleagues.

- Pre-Symposium Tours
 - Decker Lake Youth Center, Secure Care Facility
 - Salt Lake Valley Youth Center, Detention Facility
- Welcome Reception, sponsored by Bob Barker Company
- Movie Showing, Hard Miles, sponsored by Rite of Passage
- Awards Luncheon
- Halloween Costume Contest and Scavenger Hunt
- Education Social Hour, sponsored by Life Skills Reimagined

Workshop Solicitation and Selection Process

The National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS) solicits Symposium workshop proposals from its membership, from prior workshop presenters, and from a broad network of partner organizations distributing the call-for-presentations to their respective constituency groups.

On average, the Symposium attracts an audience from 40+ states and U.S. territories and 1-2 foreign countries. The submission of workshop proposals represents an equally geographically diverse audience offering an array of topics focusing on critical issues and/or emerging trends in congregate care facilities, community-based programs, court services, behavioral health, family engagement, educational services for at-risk youth, and much more.

For the 2024 National Symposium on Juvenile Services, 134 proposals were received and reviewed. A total of 46 workshops were invited to be on the agenda along with 12 poster sessions. The review process consists of a committee comprised of the Symposium Content Coordinator, the Chair of the NPJS Training and Professional Development Discipline Group, NPJS President/CEO, as well as the

Managing Director of NPJS. The committee strives to create a balanced agenda that addresses the broad range of professional development needs of the Symposium participants along with a diverse range of perspectives from the field. Presenters are practitioners, academicians, and parent/youth voices with current or prior history with the juvenile justice system.

Submissions to the proceedings did not undergo a review process or editing other than formatting for publication.

Background

The National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS) is a 501(c)(3) serving juvenile justice professionals across the United States. NPJS was founded in 2004 when four nonprofits merged their respective membership organizations.

- The Council for Educators of At-Risk and Delinquent Youth
- The Juvenile Justice Trainers Association
- The National Association for Juvenile Correctional Agencies
- The National Juvenile Detention Association

Today NPJS serves 8,700+ members spanning juvenile justice services. To better serve the professionals within its membership, NPJS established discipline groups based on member interest and field expertise. These discipline-focused working groups include:

- Behavioral Health / Clinical Services
- Community-Based Services
- Court Services
- Educators of At-Risk and Justice-Involved Youth
- Short Term Placement / Juvenile Detention
- Long Term Residential / Juvenile Corrections
- Staff Training & Professional Development
- Family Engagement

In addition to the annual Symposium and Leadership Institute, NPJS sponsors the Journal of Applied Juvenile Justice Services, a refereed multi-disciplinary publication.

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About the Keynote & General Session Speakers

National Partnership for Juvenile Services claims no copyright ownership over the biographies of the Keynote and General Session Speakers.

Wayne Bear

President/CEO, NPJS

Mr. Wayne Bear is the President/CEO of the National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS). Prior to his current role in NPJS, Mr. Bear was President of the National Juvenile Detention Association (NJDA) and Chairperson of the Critical Issues and Policy Direction Committee, which is responsible for developing and promulgating all of the Position Statements for the organization. Mr. Bear's fifty plus year career path includes work as a detention front line staff, juvenile probation officer, residential program management and private practice as a licensed social worker and recently most recently as the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Partnership for Juvenile Services (PPJS) formerly known as JDCAP.

Mr. Bear saw his initial involvement in NPJS as an opportunity to be an advocate for front line professionals who were constantly facing external criticisms and viewed as opponents to justice reform. Wayne quickly became involved in projects to build collaboration between jurisdictions and to reframe the concept of "juvenile justice system" to be inclusive of service providers, community resources and family. This approach has helped develop a more comprehensive approach to better position youth and family's access to a continuum of care that leads to lasting positive change.

In both his role as the Chairperson of the Critical Issues Committee and now as the CEO of NPJS, Mr. Bear has unwaveringly focused the organization's activities toward achieving their mission engaging field experts to disseminate the groundbreaking research, to engage in networking opportunities to share best practices, to facilitate training on the most current approaches to child care, and to create position statements that inform decision-makers who are needed to fund and support our member efforts. All of these efforts focused on the sole purpose of ensuring a high-quality continuum of services from in-home diversionary projects to and including out-of-home care for the most high-risk, high-need youth.

Brett Peterson

Director of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Division of Utah

Brett Peterson is the Director of the Utah Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services. He is responsible for the operation and management of the continuum of care including early intervention, shelter, detention, long-term secure settings and parole. As Director, Brett is committed to reducing the need for out-of-home placements, correlating the services provided with the leading research related to adolescent brain development and ongoing implementation of significant juvenile justice reforms. In 2019, Brett successfully championed efforts to keep youth under 12 out of the formal system, to greatly limit when a youth can be tried as an adult, and created a mechanism where a youth may remain in the juvenile system until age 25, as an alternative to being tried as an adult.

Brett has guided Utah as they have reduced the use of detention by over 50% since 2018. In addition, Brett has led Utah's effort to establish a robust statewide early intervention model, JJYS Youth Services. Through the Youth Services model, early intervention has seen an increase of over 50% from 2018, providing voluntary services to thousands of youth statewide.

Brett is considered a national expert on system reform and implementation and is a frequent speaker and panelist, and has also presented to Congress on juvenile justice. Brett is the current President of the Council of Juvenile Justice Administrators.

Tracy Gruber

Executive Director, Utah Department of Human Services

Tracy Gruber was named executive director of the Utah Department of Human Services in January 2021 and became the first executive director of the Utah Department of Health and Human Services July 1, 2022. Prior to her appointment by Governor Spencer J. Cox, she was director of the Office of Child Care at the Utah Department of Workforce Services (DWS) and senior advisor for Utah's Intergenerational Poverty Initiative.

Gruber is passionate about working with community stakeholders, providers and staff to better serve Utah individuals and families with quality and

efficiency. Her work includes championing programs and policies within the Department to achieve measurable, preventative, positive outcomes that end cycles of intergenerational reliance on government services. Prior to government service, Gruber worked for a children's advocacy organization; directed Utah's New Lawyer Training Program; served as the director of a public sector retiree organization; and was a budget analyst in the Illinois Senate. In 2017, she was named as "Government Official of the Year" by Community Action Partnership of Utah. She served as the chair of the National Association of State Child Care Administrators and represents Utah on the Education Commission of the States.

Gruber received her undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin- Madison, and her Law Degree from the Chicago-Kent School of Law. She and her husband Andrew live in Salt Lake with their two young adult children, where they can ski, hike, mountain bike and treat every weekend like a vacation!

Liz Ryan

Administrator, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Liz Ryan became Administrator of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention on May 16, 2022, following appointment by President Joseph R. Biden. Prior to leading OJJDP, Ms. Ryan served as president and CEO of the Youth First Initiative, a national campaign focused on ending the incarceration of youth by investing in community-based alternatives. Ms. Ryan founded the Youth First Initiative in 2014; under her leadership, it achieved the closure of youth prisons in six states and redirected more than \$50 million to community-based alternatives to incarceration.

Ms. Ryan founded the Campaign for Youth Justice in 2005 and served as its president and CEO until 2014. The national, multistate initiative sought to end the prosecution of youth in adult criminal courts and the placement of youth in adult jails and prisons. During Ms. Ryan's tenure, the campaign's work led to legislative and policy changes in more than 30 states, a 60 percent decrease in the number of youth in adult courts, and a greater-than 50 percent decrease in the number of youth placed in adult jails and prisons.

A staunch advocate for youth, Ms. Ryan cofounded and cochaired Act 4 Juvenile Justice, a campaign to reauthorize the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act. She also served as advocacy director for the Youth Law Center, national field director for OJJDP's Juvenile Court Centennial Initiative, and as an advocate for the Children's Defense Fund. She has written extensively about juvenile justice reform, including articles, editorials, reports, and chapters of books.

Since 2020, Ms. Ryan has worked as a student investigative journalist with the Louisiana State University Cold Case Project, focusing on the murders of African Americans by the Ku Klux Klan during the civil rights era. She collaborated with other Cold Case Project students on Killings on Ticheli Road, a four-part narrative investigating the murders in 1960 of four Black men in Ouachita Parish, LA. The reporters reconstructed the day of the murders and questioned local authorities' failure to prosecute the killer: the murdered men's employer, a white man who later became a statewide Klan leader. For their work, Ms. Ryan and the other Cold Case Project reporters were named semifinalists for the 2022 Goldsmith Prize for Investigative Reporting, an award by the Harvard Kennedy School for reporting that impacts U.S. public policy. They were the only students recognized.

Ms. Ryan also worked with families of the Martinsville Seven and other advocates to obtain posthumous pardons for seven young Black men who were executed in Virginia in 1951 for the alleged rape of a white woman. Ms. Ryan and her colleagues revisited the convictions, ultimately asserting that they were tinged by systemic racism, a rush to judgment, and a lack of due process. The Virginia Governor issued posthumous pardons in 2021, saying the men did not deserve the death penalty.

Ms. Ryan earned a bachelor's degree from Dickinson College and a master's degree in International Studies from the George Washington University.

Marcy Mistrett

Senior Policy Specialist, OJJDP

Marcy Mistrett has nearly three decades of experience working in child and adolescent development in the youth justice and education fields in a broad capacity in both subject matter and service. Her experience spans policy, direct service and training/technical assistance provision. She is committed

to upholding an equity lens and to ensuring that children are treated as children is the US criminal legal system.

Between 2014-2020, Marcy was CEO at the Campaign for Youth Justice. Her work at CFYJ was recognized by The MacArthur Foundation's Models for Change, the Open Society Institute's Justice Roundtable, and The Coalition for Juvenile Justice. Marcy also served as a senior fellow for the Sentencing Project and also worked with the Restorative Justice Project where she supported a national pilot implementing ten successful restorative justice diversion programs across the country. While there, she helped distill lessons learned, supported cohort learning and launched communities of practice to advance restorative justice agendas.

Trained in social work, Marcy began her career working in legal aid with court-involved youth, with a focus on youth tried as adults. Throughout Marcy's extensive career, she has served in leadership positions in research, TTA, practice and policy around a host of issues including community-based responses to violence prevention and national college success and youth leadership through the D.C. Posse Foundation.

Marcy served under appointment to the D.C. Juvenile Justice Advisory Group and she has been acknowledged across the youth justice field through numerous other appointments, fellowships and awards. Most recently, Marcy was honored with the James Gould Leadership & Vision Award from the National Partnership on Juvenile Services (2023).

Licia Lentz

Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Dr. Licia Lentz is a distinguished, veteran educator of 24 years who serves as the Director of Alternative Education for the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU). The Alternative Education Program (AEP) educates students in two AEDY approved community schools in Allegheny County. The AEP promotes lasting success by emphasizing and teaching to each learner's strengths and abilities. They educate the whole-child in a safe and supportive school environment through restorative and trauma-informed approaches grounded in meaningful relationships with students, staff, families and community.

Previously, Dr. Lentz was the statewide regional school improvement team manager for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In that role, she supported 96 schools across the Commonwealth that were designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) through ESSA. Prior to, Dr.

Lentz also has held various leadership positions in school districts throughout the Greater Pittsburgh Region serving as a teacher, assistant principal, curriculum coordinator and assistant superintendent.

Dr. Lentz holds a business degree from Washington and Jefferson College, as well as graduate degrees in administrative and policy studies from the University of Pittsburgh, where her dissertation focused on student discipline and restorative practices. An avid sports fan who competed as a collegiate basketball player, Dr. Lentz spends her time outside of work supporting local sports teams and being a proud mother to her 11-year old daughter, Juliana.

David Parks, OBE

The Skill Mill

Davie has worked in Juvenile Justice and Young People's Services in several UK regions including Newcastle upon Tyne where he was Team Manager at the Youth Offending Team for 12 years. Davie is the founder and Managing Director of The Skill Mill Limited a NatWest SE100 listed Social Enterprise company and recipient of two Queen's Awards for Enterprise in 2021, providing employment in environmental maintenance and construction services for young people who have come into contact with the criminal justice system.

Nubia Peña

Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Governor's Senior Advisor and Director

Ms. Nubia Peña is the Senior Advisor on Equity and Opportunity to Governor Cox and the Director for the Utah Division of Multicultural

Affairs where their mission is to promote thriving and well-being for Utah's growing community through training, outreach, youth leadership development, and policy and research efforts. Ms. Peña is immensely grateful for the extensive experience acquired during the past 20 years working as a community organizer, partner, and policy advocate for underrepresented populations. She has the opportunity to facilitate dialogues amongst local and national leaders on complex topics of strategic and effective cultural engagement that addresses disparities to create access for historically underserved communities. Ms. Peña is a proud former member of the zealous team at the Utah Juvenile Defender Attorneys where she advocated for youth rights during detention and delinquency proceedings. She is certified by the National Juvenile Defender Center as a Juvenile Training Immersion Program facilitator. In addition, Ms. Peña is a national consultant dedicated to bringing awareness to intersections of trauma and the School-to-Prison Pipeline, an epidemic that targets our most vulnerable youth by streamlining them into the juvenile justice system. She also served as adjunct faculty at the University of Utah's S.J. Quinney College of Law. Ms. Peña has actively sought to bring awareness to issues of interpersonal and community violence through her professional endeavors and personal faith-based initiatives. She has a decade of experience assisting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual assault, human trafficking, and violent crimes as a Law Enforcement Victim Advocate. Ms. Peña served as the Training and Prevention Education Specialist at the Utah Coalition Against Sexual Assault (UCASA) for over a decade where she developed trainings on Youth Advocacy for Trafficked Survivors, Social Justice in Prevention Efforts, and Sexual Harassment in the #MeToo Era. During the unprecedented pandemic, Ms. Peña was assigned by Governor Gary R. Herbert to oversee the Multicultural Advisory Committee of Utah's COVID-19 Response in partnership with Byron Russell and Ze Min Xiao. The Committee of frontline and state agency leaders worked within existing frameworks to amplify efforts to alleviate the growing disparities in food security, housing and social services, economic sustainability, communications, language accessibility, digital equity, and health access. The model has been nationally and locally uplifted as an example of culturally responsive cross-sector collaboration. Ms. Peña received her Juris Doctorate from the University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law in May 2016. During that year, she was selected as one of 25 law students in the nation to be recognized and highlighted for her social justice activism in the National Jurist, a leading news source in legal education. She was also selected as the recipient of the National Juvenile Justice Network 2019 Emerging Leader Award due to her longstanding commitment to youth

rights, empowerment, and leadership development. Ms. Peña was named in Utah Business Magazine's 2020 40 Under 40 award recipients, recognized among the 2020 Heroes for Utah Philanthropy Day, selected as Sundance Film Festival 2021 Women's Leadership Celebration honorees and awarded the Utah Business Magazine's Living Color recognition for service in driving equity and inclusion in the state. In 2022, she received the Utah Minority Bar Association (UMBA) Jimi Mitsunaga Excellence in the Law Award for significantly contributing to and promoting the provision of legal services to underserved communities, excelling in the practice of law, and contributing to UMBA's mission of inclusive social impact. In 2023, Ms. Peña was named the recipient of YWCA's Outstanding Achievement Award for her long standing efforts advancing Racial and Gender Equity and she received the 2023 Governor's One Utah Rural Summit Champion recognition. She was also an inaugural awardee for the 2023 Martha Hughes Cannon Award for Policy Advocacy from Utah Women Run. In addition, she was selected as a 2023 Presidential Leaders Scholars, a national development experience that hones leadership capabilities through interactions with former U.S. Presidents, key administration officials, world-renowned academics, and business and civic leaders. In 2024, Ms. Peña was selected as a Young American Leader, a national program hosted by Harvard Business School that aims to develop leaders who understand cross-sector collaborations for shared prosperity and can implement impactful initiatives with the opportunity to scale for greater reach. Most recently, she was named one of Utah's 40 Over 40 Leaders for advancing efforts that promote access, opportunity, upward mobility, and uphold the dignity of all served

Claudia Loayza

Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Magnify Utah Program Manager

Claudia Loayza is a government relations and engagement professional that is dedicated to building communities that thrive in place. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science from Brigham Young University and a Master's in City and Metropolitan Planning from the University of Utah in 2022. In 2021, she was honored as one of Utah Business' 20 in Their 20s, recognizing her work in state government with the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs. She has since joined Developed. By Women, a local

nonprofit and sister organization to Giv Group, that is creating a space for women and underrepresented groups to learn, own, and invest in real estate development in sustainable and collaborative ways. She is also the principal curator for Magnify Utah, a learning and resource hub under the Division of Multicultural Affairs that streamlines statewide information and resources to support individuals looking to establish connections to their statewide community, as well as those starting a new chapter.

As a proud born and raised first-generation Utahn, she has learned the importance of bridging across differences and seeking common goals to advance innovative solutions that connect people and places. She is deeply committed to creating opportunities that uplift and open doors for all communities that call Utah home.

Lydia Bigcraft

Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Youth & Project Specialist

Lydia Bigcraft is a dedicated Youth & Project Specialist with a strong focus in overseeing youth leadership programming. With a B.S. in Criminology and B.S. in Political Science, she is passionate about the intersections between community members' lived experiences and systemic strategies for community care. As a third-culture individual who grew up in Malaysia, she brings a unique perspective to her work, while proudly calling Utah her home for the past four years.

In her role, she is committed to making Utah a welcoming place where all youth feel a deep sense of belonging and have the opportunity to thrive as the next generation of leaders. Her work with system-involved youth is particularly impactful, as demonstrated by her creation of the "Hope Series," a set of innovative programs designed to empower these young individuals to realize and actualize their full potential, recognizing their capacity to be positive changemakers in their communities. Driven by a vision of seeing all youth in Utah flourish, she continues to champion the cause of system-involved youth, ensuring they have the resources, support, and opportunities they need to succeed and become future leaders.

Miguel Trujillo, LCSW, PHD

Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Training and Research Coordinator (MCA)

Dr. Miguel Trujillo is a social worker, researcher, educator, and has spent a career supporting local communities. His primary research interest lies in improving our education systems; however, as a community engaged researcher, his research follows the needs of the community, having supported projects on housing, environmental justice, belonging, and the school to prison pipeline, amongst others. As a practitioner, he worked with justice impacted families for many years, which continues to inform his worldview.

Since this project was completed, he now holds dual appointments as an assistant professor in the College of Education and as the associate director of community engaged scholarship & evaluation with University Neighborhood Partners at the University of Utah. He is honored to still be involved with the Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs and continues to support their vision of a thriving Utah for all.

Lester Young

Executive Director, Path2Redemption Training and Consulting

Lester Young, Jr is a native of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina. At the age of 19, Mr. Young was given a life sentence (with the possibility of parole after serving 20 years). During his time in prison, Lester struggled with finding redemption and often wondered what his purpose was. While journaling he asked himself this question, “What is the footprint you want to leave in this world?” It was then that he realized his purpose was to be “that” voice to help at-risk youth. With approval from the warden, Lester along with the prison chaplain began meeting to create outlines, programs, and classes to instruct and mentor fellow incarcerated individuals. This is where the idea of him establishing his non-profit organization “Path2Redemption” got its start. On May 15, 2014 (22 years and 5 months later), Lester was released on parole. Even after his release, the outlines of his programs are still being taught in prison. He also received a pardon by the South Carolina Probation and Parole Board in 2020.

Lester has hosted numerous workshops for youth as well as incarcerated individuals. He is the author of the following self-help books:

- “The 5 Stages of Incarceration”
- “The 5 Stages of Growth”

The books are Lester’s personal stories on how he was able to acknowledge and address triggers during his incarceration that were affecting his personal growth. For more information on his journey, visit <http://path2redemption.org/>.

Accomplishments/Certifications:

- Honored as Advocate of the Year by the Commission of Minority of Affairs of SC
 - Certified Transformational Life Coach
 - Ban the Box Ordinance passed by the City of Columbia, SC, and Eight other City councils passed similar ordinance passed in SC
 - Advisory Board for Housing in Columbia, SC
 - Leadership of Columbia Class of 2022
 - Community Leadership Award
 - Emerging Leaders Fellow for Social Justice with Cuny College Department of Labor
 - Sr. Movement and Capacity Building Specialist with JustleadershipUSA
 - Certified DISC Assessment Trainer
-

Keynotes & General Session Presentations

Opening Keynote & Welcome

General Session | Opening Keynote

Wayne Bear, President/CEO, NPJS

Brett Peterson, Director of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Division of Utah

Tracy Gruber, Executive Director, Utah Department of Human Services

Liz Ryan, Administrator, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention

Marcy Mistrett, Senior Policy Specialist, OJJDP

Licia Lentz, Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Awards Luncheon

General Session | Awards Luncheon

Wayne Bear, President/CEO, NPJS

*Brett Peterson, Director of Juvenile Justice and Youth
Services, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Division of Utah*

David Parks, OBE, The Skill Mill

Licia Lentz, Allegheny Intermediate Unit

Cultivating Youth Leaders Through Art, Mentorship, and System Navigation

General Session | Youth Panel

Nubia Peña, Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Governor's Senior Advisor and Director

Claudia Loayza, Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Magnify Utah Program Manager

Lydia Bigcraft, Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Youth & Project Specialist

Miguel Trujillo, LCSW, PHD, Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs (MCA), Training and Research Coordinator (MCA)

ABSTRACT

The Utah Division of Multicultural Affairs' mission is to promote pathways to opportunity-building and community connection across the state. We have served Utah for over 10 years and have strived to embody the concept of "meeting people where they are", which is both a mindset and a process. In collaboration with the Utah Division of Juvenile Justice and Youth Services and several outstanding organizations, we work to co-create leadership programming with system- involved youth that can encourage personal growth and inspire successful reintegration. Through the power of community, motivated mentors, and trauma-informed art engagement in the form of murals and creative writing workshops, we are committed to bring hope, love and connection into spaces that are most in need. Join us for a panel of dedicated community partners and youth who have navigated the system themselves to learn how we can build leadership programs that prioritize healing, encourage civic engagement, and empower youth to explore a future of possibilities.

The 5 Stages of Incarceration: How I Found My Path2Redemption While Serving Life

General Session | Closing Keynote

Lester Young, Path2Redemption Training and Consulting

ABSTRACT

In this Keynote address, Lester Young advocates for prison reform and rehabilitation. He shares his Path2Redemption of incarceration spanning over 22 years and 5 months. He will discuss The Five Stages of Incarceration, Self-Denial, Anger, Victimization, Forgiveness, and Transformation.

Through introspection and resilience, he discovered these stages within himself and began teaching others while incarcerated. The keynote illustrates how confronting these stages led to personal growth, redemption, and a commitment to positive change.

Workshops

50 Years of Youth Justice: Successes to Date and the Challenges That Lie Ahead

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Naomi Smoot, OJJDP

Marcy Mistrett, OJJDP

Keywords: Medicaid, JJDP, youth justice reform

ABSTRACT

As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act (JJDP), we have much to celebrate, and much more work left ahead. Join us for a conversation about how youth justice has changed during the 50 years since the JJDP's enactment, and discussions about key opportunities and challenges to come, including implementation of new Medicaid legislation that could impact youth in detention.

INTRODUCTION

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act serves as the main federal legislation on youth justice in our country. Signed into law in September 1974, the Act created the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and established basic protections for young people who come into contact with the justice system. Significant progress has been made in the past 50 years thanks to the JJDP, but much work is left to be done. Emerging challenges and potential opportunities also exist, as states prepare for changes related to Medicaid access, and the impacts on the youth population.

CORRESPONDENCE

Naomi Smoot

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Suicide Prevention - It's Everyone's Job!

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Beth Rogers, Juvenile Rehabilitation, DCYF WA State

John Bolla, MS, SUDP, DSPS, Juvenile Rehabilitation, DCYF WA State

ABSTRACT

This presentation addresses the critical importance of proactive suicide and self-harm prevention and treatment in juvenile incarceration settings. We will describe a statewide program implemented in 2001 to address dramatic increases in self-harm behaviors and a completed suicide in one of our secure facilities. We will cover continuous quality improvements over the last two decades, and how this contributed to zero completed suicides in any of our facilities for over twenty years. We will describe recent adaptations in response to the increasing concentration of young people in our care with complex mental health needs and suicide risks. We will share the details of the policies, principles, protocols, and practices that have contributed to an effective agency response to relevant risks.

CORRESPONDENCE

Beth Rogers

beth.rogers@dcyf.wa.gov

The Power of Story: Ensuring Criminogenic Needs are Met and Protective Factors are Grown

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Dr. Sasha Barab, Lifelab Studios

Christina Badilla, Maricopa County Juvenile Probation Department

Dr. Adam Fine, Arizona State University

Chief Eric Meaux, Maricopa County Juvenile Probation

ABSTRACT

Many justice-involved youth have suffered from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), putting them at risk. Unaddressed criminogenic needs increase the likelihood of reoffending. Despite good assessments, changing protective factors is challenging due to overburdened staff and limited resources. In this workshop, we, a personal growth and life wellness company in partnership with Maricopa Juvenile Probation Department, will share our experience supporting thousands of justice-involved youth and providing strength-based feedback to over 20,000 youth-authored stories focused on growing protective factors across all contexts of care: detention, probation, diversion.

OVERVIEW

Justice-involved youth often face a myriad of challenges rooted in Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which substantially increase their risk of reoffending if their criminogenic needs go unmet (Folk et al., 2021; NRC, 2013). Despite efforts from various counties to assess these needs, helping youth cultivate protective factors remains a daunting task. Overworked staff, insufficient resources, and the inherent difficulty in promoting meaningful behavioral change all contribute to this problem. To tackle this, there is an

urgent need for a solution that engages youth meaningfully, offers around-the-clock accessibility, tracks progress, and provides actionable insights for probation officers without adding to their already overwhelming caseload.

Through a partnership between Lifelab Studios, Arizona State University's School of Criminology, and the Maricopa Juvenile Probation Department, a solution has been crafted that supports over 25,000 youth-authored stories. These stories, rich with individual experiences, have been used as the basis for strength-based feedback aimed at helping youth make progress in addressing critical criminogenic needs. The stories do more than just reveal behaviors; they offer a window into the minds of these young individuals. They allow us to see beyond numbers and statistics, providing a raw and humanized look into the struggles that traditional data often cannot capture. The Urban Institute affirmed this in 2019, stating that "narrative analysis can reveal nuances in youth experiences that are often missed in traditional methods, leading to more targeted interventions" (Smith et al., 2019).

By analyzing these youth-authored narratives, we are gaining invaluable insights into the factors that lead to justice involvement, the mental health struggles youth face, their coping mechanisms, and the barriers to successful rehabilitation. In this paper, we examine stories centered around violence and substance use, revealing how AI-driven insights can personalize care for justice-involved youth. We also highlight the importance of ensuring that each youth receives personalized feedback in a way that resonates with their unique experiences and helps guide them toward growth.

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act serves as the main federal legislation on youth justice in our country. Signed into law in September 1974, the Act created the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and established basic protections for young people who come into contact with the justice system. Significant progress has been made in the past 50 years thanks to the JJDP, but much work is left to be done. Emerging challenges and potential opportunities also exist, as states prepare for changes related to Medicaid access, and the impacts on the youth population.

THE JOURNEY.DO PROGRAM

Journey.do's connected growth platform, integrating AI and personal Growth as a Service, provides a robust framework to address criminogenic needs and develop life skills for justice-involved youth. Our mobile app emphasizes learner-driven goals through a patent-pending model where youth engage with peers, submit life integration stories, and receive

feedback from trained specialists. Grounded in behavior change principles and evidence-based practices, this approach ensures personalized care and goal-oriented growth.

Youth work in small, secure groups, connecting with relatable peer stories to fuel motivation and promote positive visions of success. This model aligns with positive youth development strategies, recognizing the importance of peer influence during adolescence (Fine et al., 2021; Deković, 1999). At the core of the platform are **Growth Modules**, which youth complete in a 4-stage cycle: **Connect, Grow, Apply, and Share**. The process begins by connecting youth with stories shared by relatable peers, helping them build motivation and visualize success. From there, youth move through the stages of growth, applying their lessons in real-life contexts. Strength-based feedback is offered after each stage, and upon completion, youth have the option to share their accepted stories to inspire others within the system.

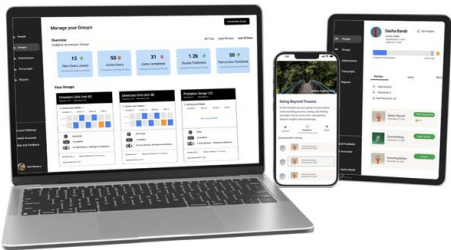


FIGURE 1: COACHING PLATFORM

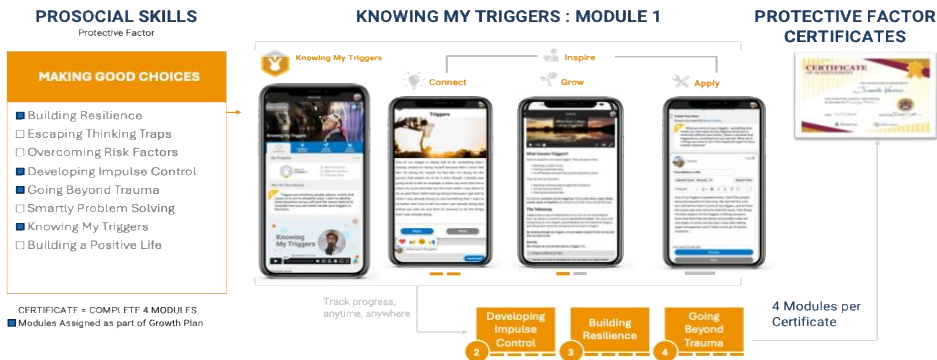


FIGURE 2: MODULES AND CERTIFICATES

The program targets 8 protective factor areas tailored to each youth’s specific criminogenic needs, including antisocial behaviors, poor family and peer relations, positive attitudes, substance abuse, mental health, and educational challenges (Andrews & Bonta, 2010). The **Growth Journey Arc** incorporates evidence-based practices from psychology, education, and

behavioral sciences to guide youth through a structured path designed to promote meaningful change. These tailored Growth Plans include stories of peer experiences, skill-building exercises, and trauma-informed feedback, all working toward a clear transition plan that celebrates achievements and outlines future steps for reintegration into society. To lighten the load on county staff, the **"come alongside service model"** was developed. Here, trained specialists manage the program from intake to outtake, ensuring fidelity while also reducing staff burden.

This model provides probation officers with a transparent system that tracks progress while also offering real-time insights into the youth's development. Features like the **Coaching Dashboard** and **AI-driven Submission tab** further streamline the process, ensuring that probation officers can assess progress without added administrative duties. Our empirical testing shows that AI-generated feedback consistently outperforms human reviewers when it comes to key metrics like tone, accuracy, and usefulness. One youth shared, "The feedback I get makes me feel like someone's really listening. They get where I'm coming from and help me see a way forward." Officers, too, have noted how the AI system enhances their ability to deliver trauma-informed care in a way that feels authentic, efficient, and scalable.



DATA ANALYSIS

A. Teen Violence

The following analysis is based on youth narratives focused on violence from both detention and probation/diversion settings. With a combined

analysis of over 20,000 stories, Journey.do's AI allowed us to identify key themes, contributing factors, and coping strategies in the stories of justice-involved youth.

Violence in Detention

From the 14,384 stories submitted by detained youth, 1,262 referenced violence, accounting for approximately 9% of all stories. Violence manifests frequently in these narratives, often driven by peer pressure and impulsive reactions to perceived disrespect. In one instance, a youth recalled: “A kid got mad at me during PE and started trash talking. I could’ve ignored him, but I didn’t. I talked back, and it turned into a fight.” This quote encapsulates the impulsiveness and escalation that often characterizes violent altercations among incarcerated youth.

Further exacerbating the issue is the accessibility of firearms, referenced in 41% of the violence-related stories. One youth described getting involved with guns at an early age, admitting that guns and drugs became intertwined with his sense of identity. “Guns made me feel powerful, like no one could mess with me. But now, I see how they got me here—in detention, facing charges,” he reflected. Gun violence often appears as a normalized part of life in their communities, complicating efforts to intervene.

Domestic violence was also prevalent, mentioned in 37% of stories. Many youth described traumatic home environments where violence was commonplace. One youth recounted, “I watched my dad hit my mom over and over. Then she started taking it out on me and my siblings. I grew up angry, feeling like fighting was the only thing I knew.” These stories reveal the cyclical nature of violence, where witnessing or experiencing violence in the home often sets the stage for aggressive behavior later in life.

The factors contributing to violence are clear: **Childhood trauma (78%)**, **substance abuse (65%)**, and **negative peer influence (59%)** were the most prominent contributors. Without strong positive role models—an element mentioned in only 52% of stories—many youth feel that aggression is the only path to survival or respect.

Violence in Probation and Diversion

In contrast, of the 5,855 stories submitted by probation/diversion youth, 419 referenced violence (6% of the total). While physical

confrontations were still common, accounting for 37% of these stories, they were often driven by emotional conflicts or misunderstandings. One youth shared, “We both liked the same boy, and she said I betrayed her. Instead of walking away, we fought. I wish I had walked away.”

Gun violence, though mentioned less frequently (18%), had a significant emotional toll on youth. One young person reflected, “Two of my best friends were killed in shootings. I don’t feel safe anymore—not even just walking home.”

Contributing factors like emotional regulation difficulties (33%), peer pressure (26%), and unresolved trauma (20%) were still present but less severe than in the detained group. The absence of positive role models was an even more notable factor among probation/diversion youth, mentioned in only 14% of the stories. These insights indicate that while violence persists across both groups, the pathways and contributing factors vary, emphasizing the need for nuanced, individualized approaches to intervention.

Conclusion

Both groups of youth—those in detention and those in probation or diversion—share profound experiences of violence, often rooted in childhood trauma, emotional struggles, and negative peer influences. However, the way violence manifests and the factors driving it vary between the groups. Detained youth more frequently report physical altercations and gun-related incidents, while probation/diversion youth emphasize emotional regulation and domestic issues. These findings underscore the importance of tailored, trauma-informed interventions to address the specific needs of each group, with a focus on emotional support, peer relationships, and providing positive role models.

B. Substance Use

Substance use was another prominent theme, with distinct patterns observed between detained youth and those on probation/diversion. Across both groups, stories reflected struggles with drugs and alcohol, often rooted in trauma and emotional distress.

Substance Use in Detention

From the 14,384 detention stories, 2,437 (17%) referenced substance use. Cannabis was the most commonly mentioned substance (65%), often described as a coping mechanism. One

youth shared, “Weed helped me forget. I could pretend the pain wasn’t there, even if it was just for a little while.”

Alcohol was also prevalent (52%), often used in combination with other substances. “Beer was easy to get, and it made me feel like I was on top of the world,” one youth explained, underscoring how alcohol was both accessible and socially accepted among peers.

Opioids were mentioned in 41% of the substance use stories, highlighting the growing crisis of prescription drug abuse. “Percs took over my life. It started with just one pill for pain, but it got out of control fast,” one young person admitted. Many youth described the rapid progression from casual use to addiction, pointing to deeper systemic issues.

Key contributors to substance use included **trauma (70%)**, **peer pressure (61%)**, and **family dysfunction (55%)**. Many youth described drug use as a form of escape from difficult family dynamics or a way to cope with mental health struggles. “When my family fell apart, I turned to drugs. It was easier than facing what was happening around me,” explained another youth. Trauma and instability at home were common threads in many stories, reflecting the depth of pain these young people were enduring.

Substance Use in Probation and Diversion

Substance use was also prevalent among probation/diversion youth, with 1,877 stories (22%) referencing drugs or alcohol. Cannabis remained the most frequently mentioned substance (45%), though youth often described it as a tool for relaxation rather than an entry point into harder drugs. “Weed made me feel like I could handle everything—like the stress just melted away,” one youth shared.

Alcohol was also a significant factor (35%), with many youth using it to cope with social pressures or emotional turmoil. “I started drinking at parties, but soon I was drinking to get through the day,” one youth explained. Nicotine and vaping were mentioned by 20% of probation/diversion youth, with many youth noting that what started as a social activity quickly became an addiction. “I started vaping to fit in with my friends, but now I can’t stop, even when I want to,” shared one youth.

The factors driving substance use among probation/diversion youth mirrored those of detained youth, though emotional distress (67%)

and mental health challenges (55%) were even more prominent. Peer pressure (40%) and family dysfunction (35%) were also significant, with many youth pointing to these factors as triggers for their substance use.

Despite the prevalence of substance use, many youth identified protective factors that helped them resist or overcome their struggles. **Support systems** (43%)—such as caring family members, mentors, or friends—played a critical role in keeping youth away from substances. “My coach believed in me when no one else did. That made all the difference,” one youth reflected.

Engaging in **positive activities** (39%)—like sports, arts, or hobbies—also helped many youth find purpose and avoid the lure of drugs. “Once I joined the basketball team, I had something to look forward to and a reason to stay clean,” one youth shared. These stories of resilience highlight the importance of providing justice-involved youth with supportive environments and opportunities for personal growth.

Conclusion

Both groups of youth—those in detention and those on probation or diversion—shared significant experiences of substance use, often rooted in emotional distress, trauma, and peer pressure. However, the way substances were used and the factors driving that use varied slightly between the groups. Detained youth more frequently reported harder drug use, such as opioids and stimulants, while probation/diversion youth leaned more heavily on cannabis, alcohol, and nicotine. These findings underscore the importance of tailored, trauma-informed interventions that address the emotional and social drivers of substance use in each group, while also providing the support systems and positive activities that can help youth resist or recover from substance use.

PARTING THOUGHTS

The narratives shared by these youth offer invaluable insights into their lives, experiences, and the complex challenges they face. Through these stories, we are reminded of the profound impact that trauma, mental health struggles, and family dynamics can have on youth behavior if they are not afforded necessary resources and supports to overcome their challenging experiences. These narratives not only reveal the struggles youth endure but also showcase their strength, resilience, and desire for change.

The use of **AI** in analyzing these stories has proven essential. With over 25,000 youth-authored narratives processed, AI has helped us identify patterns, themes, and contributing factors that would have been impossible to track manually. The **Journey.do** platform allows us to provide personalized, trauma-informed feedback to each youth, guiding them through their stories and offering them a path toward healing. As one youth said, “The feedback I get doesn’t just tell me what I did wrong—it helps me understand why and how I can change.”

The Journey.do program stands out as a powerful model in juvenile justice, ensuring that every youth is **seen**, **heard**, and **valued** for their personal story. The platform’s ability to connect youth with relatable peers, provide trauma-informed support, and foster accountability makes it a critical tool for rehabilitation. Its focus on storytelling allows youth to reflect on their experiences and take ownership of their future, giving them the tools they need for successful reintegration into society.

In conclusion, the stories shared by these youth highlight the importance of a compassionate, personalized approach to juvenile justice. Their voices are a reminder that behind every statistic is a young person with hopes, dreams, and the potential for change. By continuing to refine the use of AI and enhancing the Journey.do platform, we are not only helping justice-involved youth break free from cycles of trauma and adversity—we are empowering them to rewrite their stories and reclaim their futures.

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CORRESPONDENCE

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Collaboration: The Secret to Providing Effective Services

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Mel Brown, Mel Brown and Associates

ABSTRACT

As a result of attending this workshop, those who actively participate will be able to: (1) List the obstacles to developing effective interagency collaboration, (2) Describe the benefits of effective interagency collaboration, (3) Identify in their jurisdiction potential agencies for interagency collaboration projects, (4) Describe how to develop effective collaboration projects between agencies, (5) Discuss the pitfalls and danger signs during the process of developing interagency collaboration projects, (6) Outline a blueprint for successful U, and (7) Use the information learned in this workshop to develop interagency collaboration projects within their own community.

CORRESPONDENCE

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The Power of Education: Building Foundations for Future Success

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Kristen Dench, Huntington Learning Center

ABSTRACT

A variety of studies have shown that a solid educational foundation can positively impact six of the eight criminogenic factors which lead youth to juvenile justice system involvement. Research has also shown that justice system involvement deleteriously impacts youth's academic development crucial for long-term life success. Additionally, an estimated 70% of youth who enter the system have special learning needs or differences. These educational challenges, which include the spectrum of neurodivergence as well as mental and behavioral health diagnoses, impact the majority of detained or incarcerated youth and legally require special education services. Students of color are disproportionately represented in the rates of both disability diagnosis and justice system involvement, making the matter of education one of equity as well. The OJJDP's Continuum of Care asserts that the majority of youth would best be served at the prevention, diversion, and low intervention stages of justice involvement. This is precisely the time at which supplemental educational support for at-risk youth could serve as a powerful protective mechanism against delinquency. Ultimately, at whatever stage along the continuum, proactively serving the educational needs of youth not only provides these individuals with the foundation necessary for a successful future, but also yields significant economic and societal benefits as well.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Enhancing Outcomes for Youth and Communities: Effective Engagement and Reintegration Strategies for Youth Returning From Placement

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Jason Torres, Abraxas Youth & Family Services

Chris Reichart, Critical Data Group

ABSTRACT

In this session, we'll explore effective engagement and reintegration strategies for youth returning from residential placement, focusing on enhancing outcomes for individuals and communities. By integrating evidence-based programs, we'll discuss practical approaches to foster positive engagement and overcome barriers to successful reintegration. Through case studies and discussions, we'll address critical areas including mental health, trauma, education, vocational training, and family support. Emphasizing collaborative efforts and implementing field data capture solutions and AI to reduce staff burnout, our goal is to equip participants with actionable strategies to facilitate the seamless transition of youth back into their communities. Together, we aim to promote their well-being and contribute to the resilience of our communities.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Increasing Educational Outcomes Through Engagement

Interactive Workshop | Education

Helen Avis, Methodist Home for Children

ABSTRACT

Increasing Educational Outcomes Through Engagement.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Debriefing Critical Incidents

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Christopher Rahn, JKM Training, Inc

Michelle Stagmer, JKM Training, Inc.

ABSTRACT

Debriefing is an important part of crisis management; however, reports from the field indicate it may be the most neglected part of the crisis management process. It is important to improve the consistency in implementing the debriefing process – especially considering the traumatic impact critical events can have on individuals and staff. Debriefing gives individuals and staff a chance to share their feelings, thoughts, reactions, and perspectives about the crisis incident in which they were involved. This dialogue is the foundation of the debriefing process – and gives the person doing the debriefing interview an opportunity to assess the status of the individual or staff, address immediate issues that those involved may be experiencing, assess the need for follow-up, gather information about the incident, develop or modify a support plan, and help the person achieve a sense of psychological resolution regarding the incident, which will reduce repeated behaviors of concern.

Specific to this session, participants will engage in an on-going tabletop exercise to provide relative experience and resources to conduct effective debriefing within their respective organization. In addition to responding to guiding questions focused on logistics and policy, participants will role play a debriefing scenario designed to guide participants through the entire debriefing process.

CORRESPONDENCE

Christopher Rahn

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Keeping Status Offenders out of Detention: What Works

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Judge Mitchie, Retired

Pam Vickrey, Utah Juvenile Defenders Association

Patty Norman, Utah State Board of Education

ABSTRACT

Research and history have shown that youth detained solely on the basis of status offenses are likely to suffer harmful effects and experience poorer outcomes. NPJS has recently received grant dollars through OJJDP to create a toolkit of strategies that work to keep youth with status offenses out of detention. During this session, we will explore these strategies and hear from practitioners who will share their experiences with implementation. We will also hear the perspectives of youth and families with lived experiences.

CORRESPONDENCE

Pam Vickrey

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Nuances of Providing Educational Services to Both Offenders and Traumatized Victims of Sexual Behavior

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Sam Ko, Oregon Department of Education

Karly Lefferts, Portland Public Schools

ABSTRACT

Via a state contract with the Oregon Department of Education, educators from the Portland Public Schools (PPS) school district provide educational services in two different students populations in two different Morrison Child & Family Services programs: Counterpoint Day Treatment and SAGE Youth Residential. The Counterpoint Day Treatment provides intensive, comprehensive treatment services for boys who have experienced trauma and abuse and who have had sexual behavioral problems. The SAGE Youth Residential program provides long-term stabilization for survivors of commercial sexual exploitation (CSEC). PPS has overcome some of the nuances and challenges of educating students in these two different programs. Participants will learn some of the challenges and strategies PPS educators have overcome to meet the unique needs of the students.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sam Ko

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Transforming Juvenile Probation to Empower our Future

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Jessica Durbin, Peoria County Probation and Court Services

Tesha Robertson, Peoria County Probation and Court Services

Brian Brown, Peoria County Probation and Court Services

ABSTRACT

Peoria County Probation and Court Services is shifting the culture of juvenile probation by utilizing community-based services to promote client success and reduce recidivism. This session will discuss the transformation of the department by exploring the implementation of a number of initiatives that focus on re-entry services, community and youth centered probation and addressing youth's individualized needs. Starting with a data analysis outcome, effectiveness of the probation program and the vision to implement change will be discussed. Through re-entry services and community focused probation, we identify the ability to map out resources, increase pro-social supports and provide the youth and family with an opportunity for success. This course will address establishing partnerships with key stakeholders including judiciary, justice system and community partners to maintain the momentum needed to shift the culture and implement new interventions. Acknowledging staff are any program's best asset, we will also discuss the use of participatory leadership and how to encourage staff to provide input and have ownership in the transformation.

CORRESPONDENCE

Jessica Durbin

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Self Mastery (The Authentic Leader)

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

*Donta' Smith, National Partnership Juvenile Justice & USUS
Mastery of Self LLC*

ABSTRACT

This session we plan on discussing authentic leadership which is not just about leading others. Authentic leadership is also about leading oneself. In this session, we will delve into what we consider best practices and principles of Authentic Leadership, focusing on the key elements of self-awareness, emotional intelligence, authenticity, and personal mastery. Participants will learn how to cultivate self-awareness to better understand their strengths, weaknesses, values, and beliefs, and how to leverage emotional intelligence to build trust, empathy, and rapport with others. We will explore the concept of authenticity and discuss the importance of aligning one's actions with one's values and beliefs to inspire trust and confidence in others. Additionally, attendees will discover the significance of personal mastery in continuous self-improvement and growth as leaders.

CORRESPONDENCE

Donta' Smith
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Intervention and Asset Mapping for Improved Outcomes

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Molli Cook, National Assessment Center Association

ABSTRACT

This workshop will demonstrate how intervention and asset mapping can help jurisdictions deepen their understanding of why and how youth encounter and move through systems processes with the objective to identify areas to intervene, prevent, and divert youth from system involvement.

Using the Assessment Center Framework, this workshop will help attendees identify key data points and stakeholders to engage in order to create an intervention map that depicts how youth currently encounter systems. Once intervention points are identified, attendees will be provided with approaches to needs-asset matching in order to improve responses to youth behavior through diversion and connection to care as facilitated by an Assessment Center.

CORRESPONDENCE

Molli Cook

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When Good Enough Isn't Good Enough

Interactive Workshop | Education

Kaylah Holland, BreakFree Education

ABSTRACT

Educators and school leaders survive each day using a "good enough" mentality but remaining in this mentality has crucial consequences for all students - especially those in the juvenile justice system. This session will explore how education leaders can leave the "good enough" mentality behind and change the culture in their juvenile justice facility. Resources are available at www.breakfree-ed.org/workshops.

CORRESPONDENCE

Kaylah Holland

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From Good Intentions to Great Results: Mentoring Evidence Based Practices and Quality Assurance

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Tiffany Rupe, Utah State Courts

Ansley Dille, Utah State Courts

ABSTRACT

Exceptional leadership goes beyond managing tasks, it's about igniting potential and fostering an environment where quality thrives. This session is designed for emerging and current leaders seeking to elevate their mentorship and unlock quality outcomes and success.

Participants will gain insight and tools to propel their team's performance to new heights by utilizing evidence-based practices and quality assurance using strategies from 4 key areas:

Can We See It? Mission, Vision, and Values

Are We Speaking It? Clear and constructive communication

Are We Doing It? Quality assurance and continuous improvement

Are We Supporting it? Training, coaching, and continuous learning

Speakers

CORRESPONDENCE

Tiffany Rupe

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Installing Staff Competency, Organizational, and Leadership Drivers to Sustain Change: An Implementation Framework for Success

Interactive Workshop | Training & Professional Development

Darin Carver, Weber Human Services

ABSTRACT

New initiatives in juvenile justice and human service organizations often fail to achieve intended results, not because the initiative was flawed, but because the implementation processes were not in place to sustain the change. Essentially, these entities are trying to upload new innovations through outdated organizational infrastructures. By understanding and using implementation frameworks, organizations can create an infrastructure that moves new innovations forward and sustains them over time. These drivers for sustaining change include adjustments to hiring practices, training practices, coaching/supervision, use of data, and administrative/systems change. Further, it is essential for organizational leaders to understand and recognize when adaptive and technical leadership strategies are needed. This workshop will show the significant results that can occur when effective implementation processes are used to adopt and sustain evidence-based practices for children and youth.

CORRESPONDENCE

Darin Carver

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"The World of DBT" Adapting Dialectical Behavior Therapy to Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Sara Simpson, DHHS, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

Pat Moore, DHHS, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

Pride Smith, DHHS, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

Jim West, DHHS, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services

ABSTRACT

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) is not new to the world of juvenile justice and youth interventions; however, our approach is. "The World of DBT" is an adaptive DBT-model that uses visual and physical metaphor, storytelling, poetry and art, physical activity and body-based movement to teach DBT skills and principles and build an individual's self-awareness and self-efficacy. This session will introduce participants to "The World of DBT" as a journey, discussing specific ways we have adapted DBT to fit the needs and various learning styles of at-risk youth, as well as the staff who teach and coach our youth. Participants will come away with a greater understanding of DBT skills and principles, as well as ideas for adapting DBT to youth and in various settings such as schools, residential treatment, short-term and long-term care; specifically, how to get creative and be authentic with teaching and coaching distress tolerance skills to help de-escalate crisis situations.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sara Simpson

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Mask Off Leadership: A Guide to Presenting Your Authentic Self!

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Indu Wilson, Wayne County Juvenile Detention Facility

ABSTRACT

Authentic leadership offers powerful framework for guiding leaders in navigating the complexities of today's organizational environments. When leaders understand their values, strengths, weaknesses and motivations authentic exhibition naturally occurs. By aligning principles of self-awareness, integrity, empathy and genuine relationships, leaders can inspire and empower their teams, foster a culture of trust and collaboration and drive sustainable organizational success one department at a time.

CORRESPONDENCE

Indu Wilson

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College for Youth in Care: Partnerships Expanding Youth Higher Education

Interactive Workshop | Education

Nathan Caplin, Utah Tech University

Josh Keil, Juvenile Justice and Youth Services Division of Utah

ABSTRACT

The Youth Law Center found that only one in 100 ever-incarcerated youth will earn a college degree by age 25. This statistic is stark. Does it have to be this way? Explore how Utah's juvenile justice system has offered in-custody college courses to dozens of youth in care. With partnerships at the university, local school district, state agency, and non-profit level, more than 100 long-term in-custody youth have earned college credit, while some are on their way to associate and bachelor's degrees while in the care of Utah's Juvenile Justice and Youth Services in partnership with professors representing several universities.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nathan Caplin

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Igniting Teachers! Recruiting and Retaining Educators In Programs Serving At-Risk and Justice-Involved Youth

Interactive Workshop | Education

Lymari Benitez, Ph.D., Pace Center for Girls

Cindy Caldwell, Pace Center for Girls

ABSTRACT

A recent analysis by the [Prison Policy Initiative](#) highlighted that 62% of incarcerated individuals did not complete high school due to serious educational challenges. This underscores the critical need for high-quality teachers willing to educate at-risk and justice-involved youth. In addition, even before the COVID pandemic accelerated teacher departures, [education researchers](#) predicted a national gap of nearly 200,000 teachers, with a higher share of credentialed teachers serving at-risk youth leaving their positions due to working conditions. **How can education programs serving at-risk and justice-involved youth address teacher recruitment and retention?** In this paper, we discuss and reflect on the causes of teacher turnover and its effects on high-risk and justice-involved youth based on the experience of Pace Center for Girls (Pace), a juvenile delinquency prevention program supporting middle- and high-school-aged girls who struggle academically, have experienced trauma, or are engaged in behavior negatively affecting their behavioral health. We introduce an evidence-supported framework suggesting strategies for the recruitment, retention, and professional development of teachers serving at-risk youth.

INTRODUCTION

A recent analysis by the [Prison Policy Initiative](#) highlighted that 62% of incarcerated individuals did not complete high school due to serious educational challenges. This underscores the critical need for high-quality teachers willing to educate at-risk and justice-involved youth. In addition, even before the COVID pandemic accelerated teacher departures (Wang, et.al. 2022), [education researchers](#) predicted a national gap of nearly 200,000

teachers, with a higher share of credentialed teachers serving at-risk youth leaving their positions due to working conditions (Sutcher, et.al. 2016). **How can education programs serving at-risk and justice-involved youth address teacher recruitment and retention?** In this paper, we discuss and reflect on the causes of teacher turnover and its effects on high-risk and justice-involved youth based on the experience of Pace Center for Girls (Pace), a juvenile delinquency prevention program supporting middle- and high-school-aged girls who struggle academically, have experienced trauma, or are engaged in behavior negatively affecting their behavioral health. We introduce an evidence-supported framework suggesting strategies for the recruitment, retention, and professional development of teachers serving at-risk youth.

WHY QUALITY EDUCATION MATTERS IN JUVENILE JUSTICE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

Education is not just a subject of study but a lifeline for juvenile justice-involved youth and those who have experienced a high incidence of traumatic experiences. It serves as a powerful tool for rehabilitation and reintegration into society. For these youth, education is more than just a beacon of hope; it's a transformative force that can protect against future unhealthy behaviors (Developmental Service Group, 2015). A quality learning and educational environment can foster a sense of accomplishment and belonging, help build self-esteem, and encourage positive decision-making, preventing recidivism or legal system involvement (Developmental Service Group, 2019; Kubek, et.al. 2020). Studies have shown that youth who achieve educational success are less likely to re-offend. Specifically, researchers found that incarcerated youths with higher levels of educational achievement are more likely to return to school after release, and those youths who returned to and attended school regularly were less likely to be rearrested within 12 and 24 months (Blomberg, et.al. 2011).

Education provides young people with the skills and knowledge they need to find meaningful employment and contribute positively to their communities. However, many youths involved in the juvenile justice system face various challenges, including a high incidence of adverse childhood experiences and trauma, learning disabilities, gaps in their education, negative interactions with the school system, unstable family environments, and a lack of support networks. These experiences may exacerbate the risk of involvement in the juvenile justice system or recidivism (Wolf & Baglivio, 2016). Quality educational programs serving at-risk or justice-involved youth can foster crucial social and emotional skills that are important for youth to cope with risk factors and trauma. For example, quality learning experiences

offer opportunities to develop and practice interpersonal communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and other essential life skills that are vital for establishing positive relationships with peers, families, and communities (Boyken & Noguera, 2011; Gagnon, et.al., 2022, Lipsey, et.al. 2010; Sullivan, 2018).

Tailored education programs can also help youth address risk and adversity while meeting the academic standards necessary for success. To illustrate, Pace was incorporated 40 years ago to meet the needs of girls involved in the juvenile justice system by applying gender-responsive (responding to girls' developmental and gender-specific issues so they may feel safe to develop meaningful and trusting relationships), trauma-informed (acknowledgment of how trauma drives behavior, and actively addressing trauma to encourage healing), and strength-based (encouragement and practice girls' strengths to address challenges and refraining from any form of punitive or shame-inducing redirection) principles to academic instruction and social services. A randomized control trial of the Pace model showed that it increased school enrollment and attendance for the girls it served compared to a control group. In the study, girls in the Pace program were more likely to be "on-track" academically and twice as likely to graduate than those in the control group (Millenky, et.al. 2019).

The transformative power of education is what inspires us to work toward supporting high-quality teachers who nurture brighter futures for at-risk and justice-involved youth. Academic instruction in a juvenile justice prevention or intervention program can take place in various settings, ranging from traditional community-based schools to highly restrictive correctional facilities. Regardless of the setting, all schools should offer high-quality instruction led by well-trained teachers.

THE NEED FOR HIGH-QUALITY TEACHERS IN JUVENILE JUSTICE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

High-quality education in juvenile justice prevention and intervention programs requires high-quality teachers to address the needs of the youth served. Teachers play a pivotal part in shaping young people's educational and personal development in these programs. Research continuously shows that teachers who demonstrate genuine care and concern for their student's academic and personal growth can significantly impact their success (Krane, et.al. 2016). Effective teachers create a supportive and structured learning environment which is crucial for youth who have experienced family instability and trauma (Brunzell, et.al. 2015, Jennings, 2019).

However, high-quality teacher recruitment and retention continue to be

challenging in the United States. According to the Education Commission of the States' most recent report, 40 US states and the District of Columbia have reported teacher shortages during the past five years, and 38 US states and the District of Columbia have released educator equity gap data since submitting their Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) plans (Fischer, et.al. 2022).

Furthermore, challenging working conditions and commitment to the profession, especially in schools serving low-income communities or youth with high-risk factors, contribute to the difficulty of maintaining a stable teacher workforce. According to the 2024 State of the American Teacher Survey, about twice as many teachers reported experiencing job-related stress or burnout compared to working adults. Sources of stress and burnout included managing student behavior, low salaries, administrative tasks outside teaching, supporting students' academic learning because of lost instructional time, and supporting students' mental health and well-being. An additional source of stress and burnout for teachers serving at-risk or justice-involved youth is secondary traumatic stress (STS), a phenomenon where staff exposed to youth trauma are traumatized because of their professional relationship (Smith Hatcher, 2011).

Although teacher turnover national rates have improved since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic (Turnover School Year 2021-2022= 14%; Turnover School Year 2023-2024 = 12%), it undeniably intensified the shortage of teachers (Nguyen, et.al. 2022). Many teachers retired early or left the profession during the pandemic due to health concerns and increased stress. Recent research by Kraft and Lyon (2024) argues that the teaching profession is at its lowest in 50 years when considering its professional prestige, interest among students, preparation for entry, and job satisfaction.

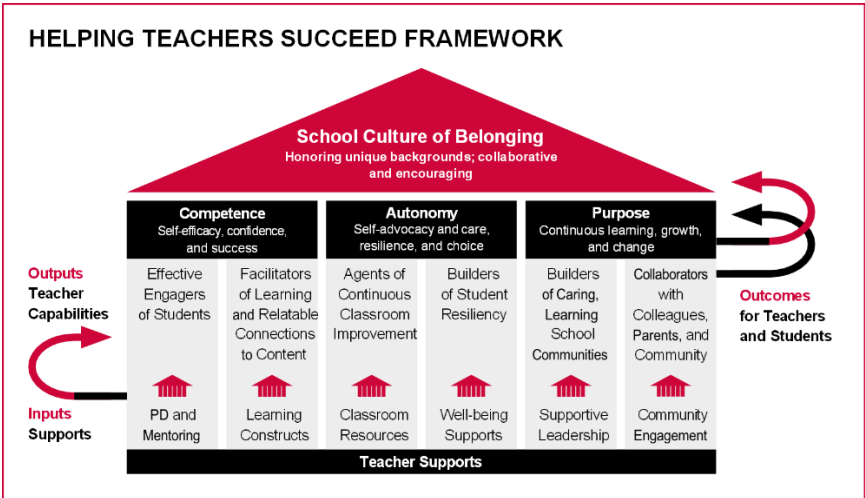
Like many schools in the US, in recent years, Pace faced challenges in recruiting and retaining its teachers. In 2023, we reviewed 56 cases of teachers of students with high-risk factors, and **a low sense of school belonging** was the most frequently cited reason for discouragement and departure from a teaching position. In addition, work Pace conducted with Korn Ferry found that keys to teacher retention include competitive compensation, work environment support, role clarity, and a strong sense of belonging. These findings are in alignment with research studies stating that teacher recruitment and retention in juvenile justice prevention and intervention programs are connected to mission-driven behaviors, job satisfaction, and opportunities to support professional learning (Houchins, et.al. 2017, Murphy, 2018).

A FRAMEWORK TO HELP TEACHERS SUCCEED

If a strong sense of belonging is key for teacher retention, **how can juvenile justice prevention and intervention programs build a culture of**

belonging to support their teachers? In an effort to answer this question and understand optimal teacher support, Pace collaborated with Milway Plus and conducted a study to explore the teacher capabilities that academic experts and successful practitioners affirm foster a sense of belonging (Benitez & Smith Milway, 2024). The study consisted of interviews with peer organizations, focus groups with Pace’s instructional coaches, benchmarks of schools serving students with academic and behavior challenges and long-serving faculty, and a survey of the literature on strategies and tactics to support teachers. The study concluded that encouraging opportunities for teachers to develop their sense of **competence, autonomy, and shared purpose within a school community fosters a culture of belonging** (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Helping Teachers Succeed Framework



This research-grounded framework advocates for supporting teachers’ pedagogy and well-being to foster healthy school cultures because that will lead to teacher retention and, ultimately, positive student outcomes. Based on what we learned from educational experts, peer organizations, and a review of the literature, we proposed that these key pillars help drive the goal of a true culture of belonging for teachers.

Of course, none of this is easy. In seeking to grow teachers’ competence, autonomy, and purpose, and thus build belonging, teachers and academics consistently cited four too-often- overlooked elements. Two weak links related to building **competence** are *lesson planning and preparation and classroom management*. Lesson planning and preparation involves the ability of teachers to anticipate errors, develop culturally apt examples, and intentionally create opportunities for student success. The second is classroom

management, which focuses on the ability of teachers to support students learning, implement effective learning routines, and use rigor as an antidote to behavior issues. These elements are critical to helping teachers engage students; facilitate learning that feels safe, is supportive, and affirms home culture; and continuously improve the classroom. A third weak link is related to building **autonomy**: interviewees cited the need for more *mental health supports* and **reflective practice** to review a lesson's impact (what worked and what didn't) and evolve approaches. Finally, to grow **shared purpose**, they cited the need for more *educator learning communities* as part of collective reflective practice in school and out as the fourth weak link. All four components equip and encourage teachers to build resilience in their students, engage in their classrooms, and contribute to a compassionate, learning school culture. They also foster collaboration among school colleagues, parents, and community leaders who can support teachers in supporting students. Taken together these elements bolster a teacher's sense of belonging.

HELPING TEACHERS SUCCEED AT PACE CENTER FOR GIRLS

Pace has been applying the framework above to strengthen its own **multitiered professional development approach for teachers to build their competence, autonomy, and shared purpose**. The approach strongly commits to fulsome professional development opportunities, prioritizing employee well-being, and providing highly competitive compensation packages. In the spirit of inviting other educators of youth with high-risk factors to learn alongside Pace, we'll detail the Pace approach, which includes organizational support for all teachers (tier 1), targeted group support (tier 2), and individualized support (tier 3).

1. **Building competence through professional development and helpful learning constructs**

These supports help teachers with lesson planning and preparation, better connect to the content, and engage students. This can include formal training on subjects, classroom management, on-the-job mentoring/coaching by a seasoned peer, and instructional leadership. At Pace, a number of centers are role-modeling collaborative, reflective practice to plan lessons and better prepare the activities of the program. At the end of every school day, the entire staff meets for 20 minutes to debrief on "positives, negatives, and tomorrows." They discuss what has worked to engage girls in learning, what has fallen flat, and ideas for next-day improvements. Other centers have a morning huddle to cover similar ground. This collective reflection affirms that staff are

journeying together, value all voices, and achieve solutions, and has inspired many centers to adopt a reflective all-staff gathering. Additional supports to grow teachers' competence at Pace are described below by tier of professional learning intervention.

Tier 1: Supports to implement and sustain the academic model by aligning classroom instruction to Pace's goals and values. Specific training supports that all teachers receive include: introduction to Danielson's Framework for Effective Teaching, Early Warning System (EWS) support on how to use girls' data and progress monitoring to inform academic instruction and interventions, consistent planning time, training in project-based learning, training in classroom technologies (for example, Nearpod to support classroom content delivery and IXL for girls' individualized learning), access to technology for all girls (a computer per girl), adoption and development of standards (aligned curriculum, pacing guides), and training on Pace's foundational pillars (gender-responsive, trauma-informed, and strength-based approaches) and girls' developmental domains.

Tier 2: Training on subject-specific tools and population-specific issues to ensure effective implementation. Teachers delve deeper into content-specific strategies, curriculum alignment, and best practices through group coaching, a teacher manual, and model classrooms that allow newer teachers to observe experienced teachers on the job.

Tier 3: Instructional coaches analyze each teacher's classroom performance and identify areas for growth. Teachers receive one-on-one tailored support, which typically includes a coach observing classroom practice, providing feedback, and co-creating an improvement plan.

2. **Fostering *autonomy* with classroom resources and support for teacher well-being**

When teachers receive well-being support and classroom resources, they improve students' learning experience and resiliency, thus fostering **autonomy** in their teaching. Resources can be specific equipment, like smart boards for group learning; news site subscriptions for students' independent research; spaces for small-group discussions; or quiet corners where students who are feeling emotionally charged can use calming techniques. Other ways to boost teachers' autonomy relate to their **well-being**. School leaders can encourage mental health check-ins, peer support groups, and work-life balance, which feels authentic when a school provides high-quality substitutes, reduces administrative tasks, and creates opportunities for

teacher self-care. To support teachers in developing their classroom management autonomy, Pace teachers can create spaces within its centers that allow girls to find peace and calm. At its Broward County center, girls can take a break at a giant coloring mandala to reflect and reset. Additionally, every team member at Pace has access to emotional support at no cost through platforms that provide live therapy, group sessions, and wellness resources. Other supports helping teachers develop their autonomy include:

Tier 1: Pace provides workshops to support teachers in the creation of safe, supportive, and student-affirming classroom environments and to advance a psychology of delivering all services by responding to student trauma, building on student strengths, and accounting for the unique needs of girls. Specific tactics include: system-level coaching addressing different topics (i.e. healthy communications, roles and responsibilities, student engagement, a common classroom vision, and clear expectations), training and practice in behavior modification strategies for girls, and Mandt de-escalation training. Mandt teaches practical techniques and concepts to stabilize and calm student behavior. This training identifies girls' and team members' triggers and cultivates healthy teacher-student and peer-team dynamics. Pace teachers can also collaborate with Counselors to create a shared language and approach to assessing situations and opportunities to address girls' emotional needs.

Tier 2: For clusters of teachers who share a department, geography, or other affinity, Pace's main focus is to provide opportunities for them to collaborate, share best practices, receive feedback from peers, and explore innovative teaching methods, for example, training on Collaborative Classroom reading curriculum.

Tier 3: Instructional coaches survey teachers to understand personal pain points. To create space for sharing personal concerns, coaches meet with new teachers 30 minutes a week on video and twice a month with longer-tenured teachers.

3. **Growing a shared sense of *purpose* via supportive school leadership and community engagement**

Teachers with supportive leadership and community establish more collaborative relationships, leading to a shared sense of **purpose** to learn, grow, and help students succeed. Often this takes the form of professional learning communities, where teachers can share knowledge and advance collective reflection on what's working and what's not to improve both pedagogy and students' learning

environment. Engaging parents and community leaders in teacher and student success reinforces a shared sense of purpose across school, home, and civic institutions that help teachers support students with high-risk factors. **Community engagement** broadens teachers' sense of belonging to both school and community.

Dr. Veronica Medina, an instructional coach at Pace, likes to say well-being starts with the “Big Why”: Why are you here, and what is your purpose? “I’ve used this with my students,” says Medina. “We would write our ‘why’ on a card on the first day of school, and I would write mine, too, so when times got tough, I would remember it.” Purpose, it turns out, breeds resilience. And building collaborative learning communities builds *shared purpose*. Additional supports to build shared purpose include:

Tier 1: All teachers participate in center-wide activities where all team members, families, and community are invited to “create partnerships,” a Pace value and guiding principle. Moreover, social services and academic team members collaborate through the “care review” process to identify girls’ intervention milestones and promote a holistic approach that considers the links between academic success and well-being. This collaboration helps teachers tailor their teaching strategies to better meet the diverse needs of the girls, fostering a more inclusive learning environment.

Tier 2: An instructional coach provides teachers’ subject-matter expertise and instructional guidance through classroom observations and individual coaching. The coaches also seek to foster collaboration among center leaders on effective instruction and intervention by facilitating professional learning communities, where teachers from a specific subject area meet once a month to share their experiences and expertise and grow in shared purpose. Beyond their professional learning communities, teachers learn from colleagues with similar contexts and student populations via peer coaching and shared resources on a SharePoint knowledge management site.

Tier 3: Instructional coaches and teachers’ supervisors work together with teachers to identify their motivations and sense of purpose. They then use this information to align a teacher’s purpose with their professional development activities. For instance, a teacher’s individual learning plan may involve increased participation in professional learning communities and learning strategies for classroom management and reinforcing positive student behavior.

This framework serves as a blueprint for continuous improvement in the classroom, aiming to transform teaching practices to consistently empower teachers to support the well-being and academic success of girls at Pace. When teachers lack adequate professional development, mentoring, classroom resources, opportunities for well-being, and leadership support, they may feel less competent, trusted, and confident in decision-making. This can lead to a lack of shared goals and a sense of belonging, ultimately resulting in early teacher turnover. By investing in teacher support and fostering their sense of competence, autonomy, and shared purpose, Pace has been successful in attracting, developing, and retaining highly valued educators. This blueprint can be applied to professional development activities for educators in programs serving at-risk or justice-involved youth.

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Taking on Transformation: When Culture Change Goes Wrong and How to Make it Right

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Phyllis Becker, Youth Correctional Leaders for Justice
Susan Burke, Carey Group

ABSTRACT

Culture is crucial for any organization, especially in youth-serving systems where the stakes are high. A toxic and punitive culture not only harms youth but also increases harm to both youth and staff. A panel of system leaders will discuss the impact of a problematic culture and the key drivers for changing it and will highlight real-life examples of how to transform the culture to support the wellbeing of youth, staff, and communities.

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Empowering Youth Voices: Holding a Community Circle for Healing and Growth in Juvenile Justice

Interactive Workshop | Leadership, Behavioral Health, Court Services / Community-Based, Education, Secure Care, Training & Professional Development, Family Engagement

Licia Lentz, Allegheny Intermediate Unit

ABSTRACT

Culture is crucial for any organization, especially in youth-serving systems where the stakes are high. A toxic and punitive culture not only harms youth but also increases harm to both youth and staff. A panel of system leaders will discuss the impact of a problematic culture and the key drivers for changing it and will highlight real-life examples of how to transform the culture to support the wellbeing of youth, staff, and communities.

Participants will leave with practical tools to incorporate community circles into their work, creating spaces for healing, empowerment, and positive change.

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Finding Your Core: Navigating Leadership Challenges with Purpose and Clarity

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Caleb Asbridge, The Moss Group, Inc.

Hope Cooper, The Moss Group, Inc.

ABSTRACT

Demonstrating leadership in juvenile services is not about what you know or who you know – it’s about who you are. As the youth landscape and workforce shifts, leading people through challenging situations and circumstances can often stretch us beyond what we think we can handle. Now, more than ever, leaders need to be grounded and authentic – rooted in a clear understanding of their identity, purpose, values, and direction. This session will provide practical guidance for new leaders to find their way to a place of authenticity and grounding, while also providing experienced leaders with new ideas to help sharpen their skills or conduct a reset where needed. The presenters will share real world experiences, helpful tools, and give participants the opportunity to interact in ways that will help them learn and grow so that they can better serve staff and youth.

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Trauma Glasses On or Off? A Trauma-Informed Approach to Challenging Implicit Bias

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

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Keywords: Trauma-Informed Care, Implicit Bias, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Juvenile Offender

ABSTRACT

National research has found that racial disparities occur for youth of color at every point of contact with the justice system. For example, Black youth are four times more likely to be arrested and five times more likely to be incarcerated compared to their white peers. This workshop will review research on implicit bias and how professionals perceive and respond to youth of color. Participants will explore strategies to reduce bias and how using a comprehensive trauma-informed approach can promote more culturally responsive decision-making processes. Workshop activities will facilitate understanding youth behaviors through “trauma glasses” and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This awareness can aid professionals to view, conceptualize, and interpret a youth’s conduct more fairly. These practical tools can assist in perspective shifting to support greater racial equity in the criminal legal system.

INTRODUCTION

Court-involved youth of color are overrepresented at every point in the juvenile justice system (Puzzanchera et al., 2023). For example, Black youth are more than twice as likely to be arrested, 60% more likely to be detained, and 63% more likely to be incarcerated than white youth (Puzzanchera et al., 2023). Addressing implicit bias is critical in reducing these disparities to create an equitable juvenile justice system (“Addressing Bias,” n.d.). This

workshop will explore how awareness of implicit bias integrated with a trauma-informed care approach can aid in more impartial interactions with youth of color.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Implicit biases are attitudes and stereotypes we carry without awareness that influence our behaviors (Kang, 2009). These “mental shortcuts” can shape our actions, and potentially lead to discriminatory behaviors. Kang (2009) provides an example of how many people associate aggressiveness with Black men, making it more likely that Black men would more likely be viewed as starting a fight rather than responding in self-defense. The Implicit Association Test (IAT) is one method of exposing these biases, as it measures the strength of associations between concepts and evaluations of stereotypes (Greenwald et al., 1998).

Justice-involved youth have higher rates of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which are stressful and/or traumatic events in childhood such as abuse, neglect, and household instability (Folk et al., 2021). A history of trauma can create mental health challenges that present as behavioral and psychological symptoms, which may result in outward behaviors that professionals misinterpret. A trauma-informed approach promotes an understanding of ACEs, which may prevent the misinterpretation of these symptoms. This approach also supports practices that foster a safe environment rather than actions that retraumatize the individual (Fehrenbach et al., 2022).

A Case Study to Consider

Read the following story that has been adapted from Ginwright, 2016. Marcus is a fifteen-year-old African American boy. Included among the people he considers to be part of his family are his mother, grandmother, and two younger sisters. His mother refuses to live with his father, who has had drug problems and has engaged in domestic violence in the home, some of which Marcus has witnessed. When Marcus was four years old, his father was incarcerated for ten years on a charge of aggravated robbery. He has no contact with his father. His mother has diabetes and has been in and out of the hospital. She has not secured consistent employment due to health-related issues that resulted in work absences. The family has struggled financially and has difficulty meeting basic expenses for items such as food, heat, and rent. Sometimes, when their mom is in the hospital, Marcus and his sisters are at home alone unattended, or they stay with their grandmother who has her own health issues.

One day when Marcus and his best friend walking home from the store, they see two neighborhood gangs “beefing.” Caught in the crossfire, Marcus is wounded and witnesses his best friend be shot and killed. While he is in the hospital recovering from his injury, the police approach, question, and accuse Marcus of being responsible for the shooting and of being gang affiliated. Angry at the accusations and still grieving at the loss of his friend, he returns to school. During class, Marcus places his head down on the desk, hoodie over his head. The teacher abruptly stops class, stands by his desk, and demands that he remove his hoodie in the classroom and sit up. Marcus pushes the teacher away from him and removes his hoodie. As a result of this altercation, school security contact the police who charge Marcus with assault and escort him off campus in handcuffs. He is suspended from school with possible expulsion.

When Marcus is home again, he feels like he doesn’t care anymore. Internalizing his grief and anger, he loses hope. Marcus concludes that he simply does not care about life or what people think about him. Attempting to ease his stress, he and a friend smoke marijuana while driving around. The car is pulled over by police, and Marcus is charged with possession of marijuana.

Reflection Questions

Consider the following questions:

- How many ACEs did you find?
- At what points may implicit biases have played a role in the adults’ interactions with Marcus?
- What would trauma-informed interventions have looked like in the various stages of Marcus’ journey?

There are many stories like that of Marcus that perpetuate the cycle of youth of color disproportionately entering the juvenile justice system.

Another important aspect to consider is the developmental process of teen maturity. Brain development research has found that a youth’s psychosocial maturity continues to develop until age twenty-five (Monahan et al., 2013). In other words, between the ages of fourteen and twenty-five, young adults continue to develop an increasing ability to control impulses, suppress aggression, consider the impact of their behavior on others, consider the future consequences of their behavior, take personal responsibility for their actions, and resist the influence of peers (Steinberg & Cauffman, 1996). These limited capabilities can impact how a youth behaves and subsequently how they are perceived by others.

Additionally, allostatic load (AL) is a biologic measure for the 'wear and tear' of chronic stress. Studies suggest that minorities or members of oppressed groups have higher allostatic loads due to persistent high-effort coping. This results in chronic release of stress hormones that contributes to shorter lifespans and earlier onset of disease (Geronimus et al., 2006).

With all these considerations in mind, alternative explanations or adjectives to help explain behavior can be useful in framing a youth's behaviors.

Table 1
Perspective Shifting: Reframing with a Trauma Lens

Trauma glasses off	Trauma glasses on
Manipulative	<i>Getting needs met in ways that have worked in the past. Doing whatever is necessary to survive.</i>
Lazy	<i>Overwhelmed. Lacking the skills to make decisions about what to do first or to organize.</i>
Resistant	<i>Mistrustful of others due to history of being hurt by others. Scared to make progress and then lose everything.</i>
Unmotivated	<i>Depressed. Fearful. Overwhelmed. "Frozen."</i>
Disrespectful	<i>Feeling threatened, unsafe, out of control.</i>
Attention-Seeking	<i>Feeling disconnected, alone, or unheard by others. Looking for connection.</i>

Note. National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments, p. 16.

A lack of a trauma-informed approach, coupled with implicit bias, can drive prison pipelines. For example, the “school to prison pipeline” is a growing trend where severe disciplinary measures perpetuate racial disparities. Black students are four times more likely to be suspended than their white peers (Skiba et al., 2002). Another example is the disproportionate number of foster care youth entering the criminal justice system, also referred to as the “foster care-to-prison” pipeline. Children of color are disproportionately represented in the foster care system and are at amplified risk of experiencing cumulative ACEs (Liming, 2021). A Midwest study found that by age seventeen, over 50% of foster care children had been arrested, convicted, and detained (Courtney et al., 2011). Additionally, 90% of children who have moved to five or more foster care placements will enter the criminal legal system (Ryan et al., 2005).

To aid in more fair and balanced decision making, the courts have made “bench cards” that target implicit bias and promote trauma-informed practices. For example, the Supreme Court of Ohio created a juvenile court trauma-informed practices card, which lists questions to examine trauma exposure in both the individual and their parents, as well as the effects of that trauma (Supreme Court of Ohio, 2017). The court recommends employing

trauma-informed strategies in the courtroom. These practices include applying procedural justice principles (e.g., explaining proceedings to the children and their families, inquiring about their needs, and asking their input as appropriate). Similarly, implicit bias bench cards offer ways to manage factors that increase the influence of unconscious bias, such as limited capacity (e.g., time pressures, distraction, fatigue), habitual/intuitive/spontaneous decisions, and subjective decisions (Illinois Judicial Branch, 2020). The cards also outline strategies to reduce unconscious bias, such as creating greater self-awareness and acting consciously and deliberately to serve as checks on unintended biases (Ohio State University Kirwan Institute, n.d.). Kang (2021) recommends the following evidence-based three-step process to counter implicit bias:

1. *Deflate* your ego and embrace fallibility. For example, avoid “moral credentialing” because you have studied implicit bias and continue to learn about bias.
2. *Debias* with short-term “spot cleaning” and long-term interactions. For example, change your environment to include diverse groups and expand contacts with less familiar social groups.
3. *Defend* against bias that persists. Consider if perspective shifting techniques may improve fairness and give yourself ample time, invoke emotional calm, and assess mental energy.

Application of Strategies

Tying it all together, here are two scenarios in which to apply the ideas discussed above.

Example 1

Youth refuses to engage and is oppositional. Youth frequently just walks out of situations.

Trauma Glasses On

- Youth is focused on survival and cannot expend a lot of energy on learning and being curious about new things.
- Youth may be in “freeze” mode most of the time as a way to manage overwhelming feelings.

Recognize Triggers in Yourself. You may want to engage in some perspective shifting within yourself. Reframe, avoid potential triggers, and implement trauma-informed strategies with the youth. Reframe perceptions of disrespect and manipulation. “The youth is trying to get out of what they do not want to do.” “The youth is purposefully being disrespectful, especially to me, an authority figure.” “The youth needs consequences for their behaviors.”

Potential Triggers. What are some potential triggers that staff may want to be aware of?

- Loss
- Change
- Disappointment
- Negative/Shaming interactions with adults

What are some strategies that you might consider trying with the youth?

- Tracking moments when the youth is more engaged and energized
- Giving the youth a role
- Avoiding public criticism and confrontation

Example 2

Youth has anger management issues and is often aggressive and confrontational. Youth is very disruptive and has difficulty calming down.

Trauma Glasses On:

- Youth is feeling threatened and unsafe right now.
- Youth does not know how to connect in a positive way, even though the youth may want to.
- Creating a confrontational scene is not helpful and confirms the youth's belief that adults are unsafe and not to be trusted.

Recognize Triggers in Yourself. You can engage in perspective shifting in yourself. Reframe, avoid potential triggers, and implement trauma-informed strategies with the youth to reframe perceptions of laziness and lack of motivation. "The youth is not applying him/herself." "The youth is purposefully being lazy and wasting their potential." "The youth should not get away with doing nothing."

Potential Triggers. What are some potential triggers that staff may want to be aware of?

- Feeling unsafe
- Feeling out of control
- Changes in staff
- Feeling caught off guard or disrespected
- Lack of clarity about what is happening next

Potential Triggers. What are some strategies that you might consider trying with the youth?

- Identifying where and with whom the youth feels most safe
- Offering the youth opportunities to be in control in positive ways
- Avoiding negative and shaming confrontations

- Offering ways for them to calm themselves down before they escalate too far

CONCLUSION

Incorporating awareness of implicit bias and utilizing a trauma-informed perspective are critical strategies for professionals working with youth of color in the juvenile justice system. Important components of this culturally responsive decision-making process include understanding a youth's behaviors through "trauma glasses" and acknowledging Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). This awareness can aid professionals to view, conceptualize, and interpret a youth's conduct more fairly. These practical tools can assist in perspective shifting to support greater racial equity in the criminal legal system.

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Creating Student Pathways to Gainful Employment Through Educational Technology Engagement in Secure Environments

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Adam Henderson, Orijin, PBC

ABSTRACT

Educating justice-impacted learners entails addressing multifaceted challenges - unraveling trauma, boosting self-esteem, accommodating diverse skill levels, and broadening career perspectives - all pivotal to empower these individuals towards a transformative future. Using technology along with evidence-based and standards-based programs to create career pathways and ties to employment.

INTRODUCTION

The transition from incarceration to employment presents major challenges for justice-impacted individuals, particularly for youth serving in juvenile detention centers. Traditional, one-size-fits-all educational approaches often fall short in preparing these students for real-world employment opportunities, leading to higher recidivism rates and higher systemic costs.

This session explores how innovative, evidence-based educational technology can transform youth-serving correctional facilities into dynamic learning spaces with measurable outcomes

It will highlight ways in which ed-tech can be used to create personalized pathways to secondary and post-secondary education, industry-recognized certifications, build digital literacy, and cultivate soft skills that are essential for long-term employment success.

The discussion will include examples of successful implementation in juvenile facilities, showcasing measurable outcomes such as increased graduation rates, and improved student engagement. The session will also address the challenges of implementing technology in secure environments and offer strategies to overcome these barriers. Attendees will leave with

actionable insights on how to leverage educational technology to create effective student pathways to employment, ultimately contributing to improved safety, staff efficiencies, and reduced recidivism.

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The Principles of Effective Intervention: Integrating the Risk, Need, and Responsivity Principles Across Program Components to Improve Outcomes for Youth in Secure Care

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

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Rhiannon McDaniel, Utah Criminal Justice Center

ABSTRACT

The Principles of Effective Intervention: Integrating the Risk, Need, and Responsivity Principles Across Program Components to Improve Outcomes for Youth in Secure Care.

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Increasing Equity Through Youth Development Practitioner Apprenticeships

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

Lisa Johnson, FHI360

ABSTRACT

Participants will learn how apprenticeships can provide access to careers for justice involved young adults, promote second chance employers, and key local, state and federal resources and support networks available to help every participant maximize their registered apprenticeship experience.

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Setting Teachers Up for Success: Sparking Innovation through Teacher-Researcher Collaborations & Codesign in Youth Carceral Classrooms

Interactive Workshop | Education

Alexandra Wolf, University of Massachusetts Amherst
Colleen Kleinsmith, University of Illinois, Chicago

ABSTRACT

The responsibilities and expectations of an educator in carceral settings continue to grow despite the lack of current research in the field to inform evidence-based practices for youth with diverse needs. To address these coexisting problems, we propose the development of teacher-researcher collaborations to support teachers (e.g., through supporting classroom inquiry, co-teaching, curriculum co-design) while also contributing valuable research to the field to develop evidence-based practices and meet youth needs. This workshop will present a brief review of past teacher-researcher classroom collaborations in the literature and what future potential collaborations could look like. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in structured small group discussions to guide the development of potential research topics and projects. The session will conclude with next steps to connect participants with researchers and potentially jumpstart these projects in the field.

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Measuring What Matters: Creating and Implementing Effective Performance Management Systems

Interactive Workshop | Leadership

Caleb Asbridge, The Moss Group, Inc.

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ABSTRACT

When it comes to improving performance in juvenile services, there are generally no shortage of opinions on what staff, facilities, or agencies need to do to improve. Rarely, however, do people pause and reflect on how we are measuring performance and whether what we are measuring really gives us what we need. Without this analysis, we can find ourselves doing the equivalent of gassing up the car by putting air in the tires. This session will focus on how facilities and agencies can set up meaningful management systems that focus on what is most important while minimizing the things that do not support the overall vision.

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Why PREA Audits are Not Working (and what we can do about it)

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Wendy Leach, J.D.

ABSTRACT

PREA was a noble idea and many positive things have come from the statute, to include attention paid to the sexual safety of confined youth. But the audit process is not accomplishing the goals of PREA. Instead audits have become checkbox activities, often easy to pass, and they do not reflect that a facility is well-run or safe for kids. This presentation explores the current state of the PREA audit, why poor results are occurring through examples of failures, and gives (and asks for) ideas to change current processes through bold and necessary change. Problem-solving, and not blame, is the focus.

Keywords: PREA, Audit, Sexual Safety.

INTRODUCTION

The Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA) was passed in 2003. Its intent was a good one: to address the sexual safety of confined people in juvenile facilities, prisons, jails and community confinement facilities across the country. In 2013, after ten years of work, the PREA standards were finalized, and audits of facilities began. Though many had high hopes for the audit system and its ability to assess facilities on compliance with the standards, it became clear after the first few years that there were gaps in auditor qualifications, training, and capability, as well as financial incentives to ‘pass’ facilities. There were issues with how audits were conducted and documented and a lack of quality assurance of the audits themselves by the governmental agencies in charge of PREA audits. To address some of this, constant additions to guidance, via FAQ's, handbooks, standards in focus, and other requirements such as auditor reviews and discipline, that were intended to assist the auditor and improve consistency, were implemented. However, these either may have added confusion to the meaning of standards themselves or made conducting an audit time-consuming and unnecessarily

complex. After 11 years of audits, the problems with the PREA audits have become plainly evident. Many facilities see these as simply an exercise in “checking boxes” but not an important measure of the sexual safety of their institution. Facilities have likewise passed audits but been the subject of scrutiny by plaintiffs such as the Department of Justice and other concerned stakeholders. Plaintiffs in negligence cases often place no weight on an audit result because of a perceived lack of credibility. This presentation aims to discuss why the PREA audit process is not working and to give ideas and have discussion about how it might be improved.

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Connecting the Heart & Mind: Learning New Skills in Onboarding

Interactive Workshop | Training & Professional Development

Katie Rose, Milwaukee County Children Youth & Family Services

Delicia Santiago, Milwaukee County DHHS – CYFS

ABSTRACT

With the variety of choice in the employment landscape, how we can create more fulfilling work experiences for our staff. We ask a lot of our workforce. They need to be highly skilled, resilient, and able to easily engage to youth and families, while often over tasked. Armed with this knowledge, we needed to created space for new employees to connect meaningfully with the work and each other. We understood those best suited would already have a passionate for the work, and so we provided opportunity to share and cultivate psychological fulfillment in our onboarding experience. Providing not only the knowledge of the tasks they would perform but honoring and valuing their individuality. We did this by implementing a series of activities that modeled our case management practices.

Individuals attending this interactive session will leave with the understanding of overall framework of our onboarding, strategies to incorporate self-reflection for new staff, and develop an understanding of what outcomes where achieved.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Language Matters: Disrupting Stigma for Families Affected by SUD Who May Experience Multi-System Involvement

Interactive Workshop | Family Engagement

Kelly Jones, MPA, Center for Children and Family Futures

ABSTRACT

Stigma and bias about substance use disorders can influence the attitudes and interactions of justice professionals, healthcare and treatment professionals, family, friends, and the person with the SUD. Understanding stigma and language improves engagement and connection to services. Teams must actively identify and disrupt stigma in interactions, expectations, language, and policies affecting families. Disrupting stigma requires elevating an understanding of stigma as a priority using a problem-solving approach, promoting ongoing examination of team decisions and actions, examining strategies to dismantle institutional and public stigma and ways to monitor how changes affect family progress and outcomes.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Sitting with Trauma and Tragedy

Interactive Workshop | Behavioral Health

Michelle Progar, Psychological Services, 19th Judicial Circuit Court

Rebecca Illg, Psychological Services, 19th Judicial Circuit

ABSTRACT

This session will focus on the experiences of clinical staff within juvenile justice programs including a juvenile detention center and juvenile justice residential program in responding to the lived traumatic experiences of clients and their families, both current and past. Discussion of working together with other professionals such as program staff, probation officers, teachers, and family members to improve the response to unexpected, often tragic, experiences youth present with while in our care. The presenters will share about learning how to "sit with" a client and his family while in their active trauma responses and providing consultation and collaboration to other members of the treatment team during these times.

CORRESPONDENCE

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The 5 Stages of Incarceration

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Lester Young, Path2Redemption Training and Consulting

ABSTRACT

"The 5 Stages of Incarceration" stands as a poignant narrative chronicling Mr. Young's remarkable journey. Having received a life sentence at the tender age of 19, he traversed a tumultuous path within the prison system, serving a total of 22 years and 5 months before earning his release through the deliberations of the SC Parole Board.

This transformative workshop is a unique opportunity for individuals to delve into the intricacies of prison life, guided by Mr. Young's firsthand experiences. Participants will not only unravel the complexities of the two distinct levels within the prison environment but will also gain valuable insights into the nuanced stages of incarceration.

The overarching goal of this workshop is to go beyond mere awareness and foster genuine learning. Through an exploration of the challenges and growth opportunities inherent in each stage, attendees will be equipped with a comprehensive understanding of the prison system. More importantly, the workshop is designed to inspire personal development by providing practical strategies and perspectives that individuals can leverage on their journey toward rehabilitation and self-improvement.

CORRESPONDENCE

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A Decade of Desistance: The Skill Mill's Innovative Approach to Reducing Juvenile Reoffending

Interactive Workshop | Court Services / Community-Based

David Parks, OBE, The Skill Mill

Andy Peaden, The Skill Mill

Keywords: Trauma-Informed Care, Implicit Bias, Adverse Childhood Experiences, Juvenile Offender

ABSTRACT

David will describe how a disruptive approach to juvenile justice led to the creation of a multi award winning employment initiative which has supported over 500 young people through re-entry to the community from detention over the past 10 years. I will describe the cross-sectoral nature of the outcomes partnership with Central and local government stakeholders, academia, the private sector and local community and voluntary sectors organizations.

OVERVIEW

This workshop, developed for the National Partnership for Juvenile Services (NPJS) Symposium, will provide an in-depth look at The Skill Mill's decade of impactful work in reducing reoffending among young offenders. With the NPJS Symposium's theme of "*Innovative Partnerships for Effective Juvenile Services*", this session will showcase how The Skill Mill has successfully developed cross-sector collaborations to create sustainable pathways out of crime for young offenders aged 16 to 18.

The Skill Mill is a UK-based social enterprise that tackles youth reoffending by offering employment opportunities in environmental conservation and infrastructure projects. Over the past ten years, the organization has demonstrated how outcomes-based models can be used to support rehabilitation, leading to a significant reduction in reoffending rates compared to national averages. This workshop will explore the program's

success and how its framework of innovation and collaboration can be adapted to the U.S. juvenile justice system to align with NPJS's goals of advancing juvenile services through evidence-based and results-driven practices.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

1. Understanding Desistance from Crime:

The first section will introduce participants to the concept of desistance, a criminological theory focused on how individuals cease engaging in criminal behavior. While many rehabilitation programs focus on punishment or supervision, The Skill Mill approaches desistance from a developmental and strengths-based perspective, concentrating on what young offenders *can* achieve. Through employment in projects such as environmental clean-ups and flood management, participants in The Skill Mill's program develop tangible skills, a sense of achievement, and personal responsibility—all crucial factors in reducing reoffending.

2. The Skill Mill's Innovative Approach:

The workshop will provide a detailed overview of how The Skill Mill has successfully combined employment, skills development, and personal mentorship to create an environment where young offenders can thrive. Attendees will explore the key pillars of The Skill Mill's model:

- **Real-World Employment Opportunities:** Through partnerships with local governments, environmental agencies, and private sector companies, The Skill Mill employs young people in projects that have a real impact on their communities. Jobs in areas like flood prevention and habitat restoration offer participants hands-on experience that builds self-worth and enhances employability.
- **Outcomes Partnerships:** The Skill Mill operates using an outcomes-based funding model, ensuring that payment and support from funders are tied to measurable successes, such as reductions in reoffending and successful reintegration into the workforce. This approach ensures that programs remain focused on real, meaningful results.
-

3. **Collaborative Partnerships and Innovation:**

A major focus of the NPJS Symposium is the development of **innovative partnerships** across sectors to enhance juvenile services. This workshop will dive into how The Skill Mill has built a network of collaborators that include justice agencies, local councils, environmental organizations, and private businesses. Attendees will learn how such partnerships have been instrumental in sustaining The Skill Mill's programs and delivering long-term outcomes. The Skill Mill's model demonstrates how public-private partnerships can provide a broad base of support for young offenders, enabling them to transition out of the justice system and into productive roles within their communities.

4. **Analyzing the Data: The Impact of The Skill Mill**

Using data collected over the past decade, participants will analyze how The Skill Mill has achieved sustained reductions in reoffending. Studies of The Skill Mill's work indicate that their participants' reoffending rates are up to 10% lower than the national average for similar groups. In this segment, attendees will explore the metrics and methodologies used to measure success, such as longitudinal tracking of employment outcomes, criminal justice system interactions, and social reintegration.

This evidence-based approach, strongly aligned with NPJS's goals, will allow attendees to see how outcomes-based models can be effectively used to drive results in their own juvenile justice programs. They will also engage with case studies that highlight individual success stories, showcasing the real-world impact of combining employment with mentorship and support.

5. **Challenges and Lessons Learned:**

While The Skill Mill's model has been highly successful, it has not been without challenges. This segment of the workshop will explore the obstacles The Skill Mill has encountered over the past decade, from funding uncertainties and securing long-term partnerships to addressing the social stigma associated with employing young offenders. Participants will learn how The Skill Mill overcame these challenges, ensuring that their model remained both effective and sustainable. Discussions will also focus on how juvenile services professionals in the U.S. can anticipate and navigate similar challenges when implementing collaborative, outcomes-based models.

ADAPTING THE MODEL FOR U.S. JUVENILE SERVICES

A key element of this workshop will be the exploration of how The Skill Mill's model can be adapted for the U.S. context and or knowledge utilised to develop further innovation. Participants will work in small groups to discuss the cultural and systemic differences between the U.K. and U.S. juvenile justice systems and how The Skill Mill's approach can be modified to suit the needs of American youth. Areas for adaptation may include:

- The role of public-private partnerships in the U.S. context
- Ensuring funding sustainability through outcomes-based contracts with local government and private organizations
- Adapting work programs to suit the environmental and infrastructure needs of U.S. communities

Participants will leave this session equipped with actionable strategies for implementing or enhancing juvenile services programs in their own areas by leveraging partnerships, real-world employment, and outcomes-based approaches.

TARGET AUDIENCE

This workshop is designed for juvenile justice professionals, community and youth service leaders, program managers, and policymakers attending the NPJS Symposium. It is particularly valuable for those who are looking to integrate innovative strategies and partnerships into their rehabilitation programs for young offenders. The workshop will also benefit anyone interested in using data-driven approaches to measure success in reducing recidivism and supporting youth reintegration into society.

FORMAT

This two-hour workshop will include a mixture of presentations, group discussions, and interactive Q&A sessions. Attendees will be invited to engage in small-group exercises to explore how The Skill Mill's model can be adapted to their own programs, and the session will conclude with a practical toolkit for building partnerships, measuring outcomes, and scaling programs for success.

WHY ATTEND

Attendees will leave with a deeper understanding of how to reduce juvenile reoffending through innovative, partnership-driven approaches. By focusing

on employment, skills development, and outcomes-based funding, this workshop provides concrete, evidence-backed strategies that juvenile services professionals can use to drive positive change in their communities. Aligned with the NPJS Symposium's focus on collaboration and innovation, this workshop offers a unique opportunity to learn from an international success story and apply its lessons to the U.S. juvenile justice landscape.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Testimonies From a Former School Principal of a School Tragedy: Using Restorative Techniques as a Preventative Measure to Lower Risks for School Violence

Interactive Workshop | Education

Dr. A. C. Young, Favor Academy of Excellence, Inc.

ABSTRACT

Reflecting on traumatic experiences as a school leader, Dr. Young will share strategies used to support student mental wellness and create a positive climate.

The session will center on the importance of galvanizing the school setting to implement strategies to support student social and emotional development and prevent student violence. Using data, testimonials, and published commentary, participants will identify trends and explore opportunities, to embed programs and strategies into operational practices. Highlighting best practices, programs, and research-based behavioral techniques, participants will discuss ways to embed behavior/violence prevention strategies into the classroom instructional process as a preventative response to rising incidences of school and student violence. The session will also unpack the impact of unaddressed student mental health needs on school climate.

Participants will receive a brief overview of research-based practices and techniques such as The Interconnected Systems Framework, the Restorative Learning Model, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavioral Therapy, Applied Behavioral Analysis, and Restorative Justice. In addition, the session will offer practical strategies for embedding the practices and techniques seamlessly within the operational practices of school or youth-serving facilities.

CORRESPONDENCE

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From Homegrown to Evidence Based: Serving Adjudicated Youth With Proven Methods

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Emily Lindley, National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP)

Lauren Zuccaro, National Youth Advocate Program (NYAP)

ABSTRACT

Has anyone else noticed that youth in juvenile justice seem to be getting more challenging while the tools in our toolboxes are remaining the same? In this session, trainers will introduce lessons learned, the hard way, over 24 years of serving adjudicated youth via two homegrown models. Focus on vital elements needed for a comprehensive program, the importance of integrated outcome measurement, and discuss program features that you might think of as cost prohibitive but really cost you dearly if you exclude them. This session also includes a call to action, and suggested framework, for collaboration across systems in order to gain more evidence-based practices that meet the unique needs of the youth and families we see cycling through the systems we serve.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Partnering to Improve Personnel Recruitment: New ways to Engage Colleges and Youth Workers

Interactive Workshop | Training & Professional Development

*Deb Getz, Child & Youth Care Certification Board, Indiana
University*

ABSTRACT

Join this interactive session to learn how to create partnerships with the Child and Youth Care Certification Board (CYCCB), the Association for Child and Youth Care Practice (ACYCP), and higher education to build intentional pathways for recruiting and retaining quality professionals who have the specialized skills required to serve the positive development of youth.

Key to these partnerships is building an awareness of the individuals who are preparing to enter the workforce and the ways to support their professional development. Build your knowledge about current efforts to match undergraduate students with the workforce during, and after, their undergraduate education to build awareness, create connections to specific employers, and build opportunities to hire students directly out of community or four-year colleges.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Implementing Parent Project to Improve Outcomes of Justice-Involved Youth

Interactive Workshop | Family Engagement

Desiree Johnson, Marin County Probation

Yuliana Valenzuela, Marin County Probation

ABSTRACT

Explaining the benefit of offering in-house parenting classes facilitated by Probation Officers to improve the accountability of the techniques being provided to families. Provide an understanding of the training program for parents of difficult or out-of-control children. Exploring the outcomes of youth who had a parent complete the program. Offering the class in English and Spanish to be inclusive of the community we serve. Utilizing programming as prevention for families before entering the justice system, intervention of families who have already been court involved, and continued support for families.

CORRESPONDENCE

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De-Escalation: What Really Works?

Interactive Workshop | Leadership, Behavioral Health, court Services / Community-Based, Education, Secure Care, Training & Professional Development, Family Engagement

Helen Avis, Methodist Home for Children

ABSTRACT

A de-escalation workshop focusing on understanding personal triggers, avoiding escalation, and why the importance of de-escalation can be incredibly beneficial. The workshop begins with an introduction to de-escalation, explaining why it is important in both personal and professional settings. Participants are encouraged to think about situations that commonly lead to conflict and the benefits of remaining calm to avoid escalation. By the end, they should feel more prepared to recognize personal triggers and apply de-escalation techniques. Participants are guided to identify personal triggers by reflecting on situations that typically make them feel upset or defensive. Participants learn ways to promptly and effectively de-escalate youth.

CORRESPONDENCE

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ICJ in Action: Understanding the Interstate Compact for Juveniles

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

MaryLee Underwood, Interstate Commission for Juveniles
Raymundo Gallardo, Utah Interstate Compact for Juveniles
Office of the Courts

ABSTRACT

This workshop will provide you with an overview of the Interstate Compact for Juveniles (ICJ), the only lawful means to transfer supervision of juveniles across state lines and the only legal process for returning runaways who have been detained. The Interstate Commission for Juveniles oversees the implementation of the ICJ. Members represent all 50 states, DC, USVI, and key stakeholders, including probation/parole officers and others, who work together to preserve child welfare and promote public safety.

CORRESPONDENCE

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Creating the Village in Juvenile Justice

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Romita Sillitti, PsyD, Behavioral Health Services

Rashida George, M.A., Founder, Institute for a Restorative Future, LLC

Douglas White, M.A., Consultant, National Partnership for Juvenile Services Juvenile Probation

ABSTRACT

Research highlights the necessity of multimodal treatment interventions to meet the diverse needs of youth in juvenile justice settings. Programs that support psychological, educational, and social development are vital for long-term rehabilitation and reintegration. Urban youth, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, face unique challenges that require culturally responsive approaches (Braithwaite, 1989). This presentation introduces a treatment model influenced by African and indigenous philosophies, addressing both immediate behavioral issues and broader socio-economic factors. Central to this model is a Core Support Team that integrates Restorative Justice, Behavioral Management, and Trauma-Informed Care, emphasizing multidisciplinary collaboration.

OVERVIEW

Integrating behavior management with treatment programs in juvenile justice enhances intervention effectiveness. While behavior management addresses immediate issues, treatment programs target underlying factors such as mental health disorders, substance abuse, and trauma. The paper reviews insights from focus groups with correctional and behavioral health staff in two major cities, identifying barriers to effective collaboration. In response, the paper presents a treatment model incorporating the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) to ensure adherence to evidence-based practices and optimize service dosages (Lipsey & Howell, 2008). This model fosters a holistic approach to rehabilitation, enhancing collaboration and treatment efficacy to improve youth outcomes (Lipsey & Howell, 2008).

METHODS

Despite the well-documented benefits of collaboration in juvenile justice, challenges commonly interfere with the integration of behavior management and evidence-based treatment. An initial focus group was conducted in 2020, with subsequent sessions held to gather additional information. The feedback revealed several significant barriers to effective collaboration, including working in silos, unclear role definitions, concerns about treatment efficacy and transparency, perceived lack of accountability for youth, low morale, and insufficient buy-in from both youth and staff. This disconnection results in missed opportunities to reinforce prosocial behaviors, teach competencies aligned with treatment goals, and mitigate detrimental behaviors. From our experience, spanning from frontline staff roles to various leadership positions, integrating custody operations with therapeutic interventions is critical to maintain the safety, security, and rehabilitation of youth.

Research outlines effective strategies to enhance collaboration including integrated care models, regular communication, and cross-training (Schwalbe, 2008). From the perspective of custody operations, the effectiveness of a behavior management program depends on its alignment with the operational demands of secure facilities. Recent post-pandemic challenges, including severe staffing shortages, an influx of inexperienced personnel, and an increasing number of formerly incarcerated staff, intensified the need for more robust professional development. Fundamentally, custody staff must be equipped and trained with competencies that enable them to function effectively as part of a treatment team within juvenile facilities. These competencies include facilitating life skills groups, recognizing youth triggers, and employing effective verbal de-escalation techniques.

Developing an “integrated care model” was therefore prioritized to reduce perception of “silos” and to improve professional development as well as structured communication. Many staff members are unfamiliar with fundamental concepts of trauma informed care and operant conditioning, which diminishes the perceived value of their efforts. To address these issues, efforts were made to enhance communication and accountability through structured check-ins between custody and behavioral health teams, and to implement real-time feedback loops, allowing staff and clinicians to provide immediate insights into youth behavior and inform daily treatment interventions.

The “Core Support Team” was introduced as a multidisciplinary team consisting of a secure programs manager, secure programs staff, educational advocate, behavioral health clinician, transformative mentor with lived experience, community and facility case managers, as well as family members when available. This team was created to engage youth from the

time of admission until discharge with focus upon developing treatment goals, implementing relevant interventions, and monitoring youth progress.

A “unit treatment plan” was designed to identify target psychosocial needs of youth and to provide a format for the Core Support Team to document collective treatment efforts. Clear guidelines were outlined with roles and responsibilities for each Core Support Team member. The unit treatment plan was introduced as a dynamic document reflecting individual target goals, based upon risk/need assessment, realistic outcomes to demonstrate progress on each goal, overview of significant triggers and coping strategies, as well as specific interventions implemented by each team member. This document facilitates effective communication among youth and staff by clearly delineating treatment goals and ensuring all parties are aligned and working cohesively toward shared objectives.

Weekly “Youth Progress Meetings,” similar to staff meetings in hospital settings, were organized for Core Support Teams. These meetings were established to promote consistent communication and collaborative planning in accordance with recommendations found in the research literature. Members of the Core Support Team meet to review unit treatment plans and to adjust interventions as needed. Youth and families attend sessions to receive and provide feedback. Moreover, youth present to the Core Support Team on a monthly basis to “petition” for advancement through successive phases of the program. Each Core Support Team member uses a scoring grid to evaluate the youth’s progress on individualized goals, ensuring consistent and equitable collaboration among multidisciplinary staff.

Integrating custody perspectives into the Core Support Team is crucial for addressing the complex needs of youth. Bridging the gap between security and rehabilitation fosters a cohesive, therapeutic environment that includes appropriate accountability while promoting values such as respect and healthy interpersonal relationships. This holistic approach not only supports youth within the facility but also prepares them for successful communication and relationships within their communities. Balancing behavioral and therapeutic support is essential for achieving long-term success in reducing recidivism and promoting positive behavioral changes among high-risk youth populations.

Unit treatment plans developed by the Core Support Team target psychosocial needs of high-risk youth. The most common risk factors associated with adolescent re-offense include negative family circumstances, difficulties with educational and vocational achievement, negative peer relationships, substance abuse, lack of appropriate leisure or recreational activities, as well as antisocial attitudes and behaviors (Hoge, R. D., & Andrews, D. A., 2011). Studies reliably distinguish key psychosocial skills that can significantly enhance prosocial development amongst offender populations. The characteristics elucidated in meta-analytic review include: responsibility

(accepting accountability for one's decisions and resisting pressure from others); perspective-taking (ability to consider longer-term consequences and to take perspective of others); and resilience (the ability to withstand and persist in the face of challenges) (Gottfredson, D. C., & Hirschi, T.,1990). Initiatives were strategically implemented to cultivate an environment that would address relevant risk factors and foster social-emotional development as outlined in research.

The schedule and programs were adapted to promote internalized behavior change as opposed to external control or deterrence. Essentially, youth are encouraged to learn "what to do" and the skills they can implement to overcome triggers for relapse and recidivism. A significant barrier observed is the inconsistent application of behavior management protocols, particularly when staff perceive a disconnect from broader treatment goals. Interviews and qualitative data collection reveal that staff often view tasks such as scoring point sheets as mere administrative duties, lacking appreciation for the deeper impact of behavior management programs. Inconsistencies in staff responses to infractions and point systems not only undermine the program's credibility but also foster perceptions of unfairness among youth. This inconsistency can result in aggression towards staff members perceived as enforcing rules unfairly.

Point sheets used for behavioral management were therefore revised with secure program and behavioral health teams to gain staff "buy in" and to emphasize the opportunities for corrective experiences throughout the day. As noted in focus circles, a barrier to effective collaboration was concern about limited consequences for youth who engage in maladaptive conduct. Point sheets used for behavioral management were modified to incorporate youth participation in treatment programs and to reinforce use or attempted use of self-regulation strategies reviewed in clinical sessions. Staff were encouraged to collaborate on point sheets and use them to reinforce treatment goals, offer daily coaching, promote positive behaviors, and consistently address negative interactions.

To effectively address concerns about treatment efficacy, our team ensured that the programs offered were grounded in research-supported interventions. Specifically, we selected services validated by the Standardized Program Evaluation Protocol (SPEP) (Lipsey & Howell, 2008) and Positive Youth Justice domains (Piquero & Moffitt, 2012). Building upon this evidence-based foundation, Restorative Justice was integrated as the guiding philosophy for our schedule, daily practices, and conflict resolution strategies for both youth and staff.

As a philosophy and practice, Restorative Justice highlights and promotes the importance of community and the development and sustaining of relationships. Utilizing a restorative approach to programming encourages both staff and youth to focus on unit-based and community-wide needs,

collective problem-solving, and creating space for dialogue and connection. This approach not only bridges the gap between security and treatment but also fosters a cohesive environment to cultivate a team of trauma-informed professionals.

Consistent with research literature, additional training opportunities were developed to educate staff about treatment initiatives, trauma informed care, restorative justice, and behavioral management. Specifically, practical training initiatives for custody staff, including six week “roll call blitzes” and support sessions, were implemented to improve understanding of behavioral health components. This training aimed to encourage staff to view themselves as active contributors to the youth rehabilitation process. By fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration, custody staff become more invested in the youth’s progress, thereby enhancing the overall effectiveness of the treatment model. In addition, all Core Support Teams participated in “case study sessions” with secure program and behavioral health leadership to receive in vivo training regarding Youth Progress Meetings and treatment planning. Bi-weekly joint collaboration meetings between departments similarly offered a forum for team building, case review, and constructive assessment of programs offered. Secure Program staff and Transformative Mentors were also invited to undergo cross-training, enhancing their roles as Restorative Justice leaders and co-facilitators with mental health staff. This collaborative effort strengthens the implementation of evidence-based modules and reinforces commitment to comprehensive, effective treatment.

Creative engagement became essential to promote youth involvement and staff support. Expressive modalities were incorporated into clinical sessions. To illustrate, creative writing, chess, and athletic activities were used to enhance social-emotional skills. Moreover, Wellness Calendars were developed for youth to promote autonomous exploration of leisure and core values. Youth were encouraged to select activities each month for self-care and self-expression. They were also invited to “Friday Nights with Superintendent” to gain exposure to professionals and potential role models who transformed their lives in the community.

CONCLUSION

This paper identified strategies to enhance collaboration within the juvenile justice system, focusing on overcoming barriers highlighted by focus group feedback. The proposed initiatives, aligned with research findings, encompass an integrated model of care, multidisciplinary treatment planning, structured communication forums, cross-training, and innovative engagement methods. Future presentations and studies should assess the impact of these initiatives based on feedback from staff, youth, and families. Additionally, continuity of care in the community must be considered to support ongoing healthy development for youth and communities.

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Is PREA Compliance Part of Your Culture?

Interactive Workshop | Secure Care

Teresa Stroud, Impact Justice

Carmela Romero, Bernalillo County Youth Services Center

ABSTRACT

You may have heard that locally operated juvenile detention facilities do not face penalties for failing to comply with the PREA Standards. Although the PREA Statute only imposes financial consequences on states for non-compliance with the Standards in state-run facilities, the Standards apply equally to locally operated facilities, such as police lockups, jails, and juvenile detention centers, including group homes that hold youth under juvenile court supervision. And while there are no direct federal funding consequences for locally run facilities that do not comply with the PREA Standards, there are good reasons to begin working towards compliance with them. This session will include a practitioner from locally operated juvenile facility who will discuss why they have chosen to pursue PREA implementation, including the benefits to their facilities' culture, safety, and protection from legal exposure. Experts from the National PREA Resource Center (PRC), operated via a competitive cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, will explain how to find resources and request technical assistance to help you get started on or to enhance your own PREA implementation plans.

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Poster Sessions

Assessing Juvenile Correctional Facility Workers' Knowledge of Developmental Language Disorder for Improved Services in Youth

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Madelynn Behm, Minot State University

Mary Huston, Minot State University

ABSTRACT

Research has found that developmental language disorders (DLD) are more prevalent in juvenile correctional facilities than in the general population; however, it is unclear if Speech-Language Pathologists, who diagnose and treat DLDs, are common employees of these facilities. It is theorized that juvenile correctional workers who have deeper understanding of DLD are more likely to offer SLP services in their corresponding facilities than in facilities where workers have a limited understanding of DLD. Through this research, we are striving to identify ways SLPs are currently working with facilities and how they may be able to work with facilities better in the future.

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Exploring Intersectionality and Disparities in the Juvenile Justice System: Embracing Change to Meet Youth Needs

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Colleen Kleinsmith, University of Illinois, Chicago

Alexandra Wolf, University of Massachusetts Amherst

ABSTRACT

This poster presentation delves into the overrepresentation of youth with disabilities and various marginalized identities represented within this population in the juvenile carceral system. Drawing upon empirical scholarship in the field, we explore how various systems of oppression (e.g., racism, ableism) intersect to shape experiences for students with disabilities involved in the carceral system. Our presentation will illuminate the stark disparities in the treatment and outcomes of students from diverse backgrounds. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in discussion with the presenters about their experiences with the juvenile justice system, their exposure to intersectionality in that setting, and their suggestions for improvement.

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Strengthening Facility Climate and Culture: Listening to the Voices of Staff and Youth Using Iterative Processes

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Kristine Jolivet, University of Alabama

Sara Sanders, University of Alabama

ABSTRACT

Juvenile facilities have shifted to encompass a more evidence-based lens when viewing the policies, practices, and frameworks being adopted to address and improve facility climate. As climate is an important factor in the overall contexts/environments where interventions are implemented, and per the field's recommendations on addressing facility climate, we a) focused on a universal implementation approach with an evidence-based approach (i.e., Positive Action); b) included both staff and youth voice in the identification of and methods to improve climate (i.e., climate surveys) as well as Positive Action; and c) created ongoing coaching mechanisms for staff to sustain positive facility climate gains. Using an iterative process, we contextually adapted Positive Action as a component of producing facility climate change. The iterative process (e.g., focus groups, climate survey data) during and after implementation, member-checking on themes and further adaptations, and additional supports needed for staff and youth are detailed. Implications for other facilities to replicate these climate improvement efforts with considerations and lesson learnings are discussed.

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Youth Perspectives on Learning Motivation in Juvenile Correctional Facilities

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

David Houchins, Georgia State University

Kris Varjas, Georgia State University

ABSTRACT

Students in juvenile correctional facilities (JCFs) display lower average reading and writing skills and often display behaviors in school that interfere with their education, so it is often assumed that they do not see value in education in general. However, it is important to center student voices and perspectives concerning education and motivation for reading and writing. To better understand the motivations and factors that affect motivations of students in JCFs, this qualitative study analyzes interviews with 34 students from three JCFs about their motivations for reading and writing and what facilitates or hinders their motivation. The resulting themes are analyzed using Self-Determination Theory (SDT) as a framework. The interview themes suggest understanding of the benefits of strong reading and writing skills, and they align with SDT in suggesting that students are motivated to learn and work in class when they have experiences that emphasize their autonomy, relatedness, and competence.

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Transferable Skills for Adolescent Girls: Using Educational Protective Factors and Strategy Instruction with Integrated Self-Determination to Improve Reading Comprehension and Writing Skills

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Kristine Jolivette, University of Alabama

Sara Sanders, University of Alabama

ABSTRACT

Being able to comprehend read text, express oneself through writing, and advocate for one's needs, are three pivotal skills needed for success whether being served in a secure facility or living in the community or whether in school or the workforce. It is known that many youth in juvenile facilities continue to struggle with their reading and writing skills and are often several grade levels below their peers in these skills. Two integrated evidence-based approaches – self-regulated strategy development and self-determination – as applied in a secure, long-term female juvenile facility will be detailed. Several case studies highlighting the improvements in youth skill sets, examples of their performance, implementation steps, and considerations for adopting and implementing these two approaches will be discussed in an interactive manner to engage facility teachers and staff in their own implementation. Youth voice will be highlighted as well as methods to intensify instruction to best meet the individualized needs presented by the youth and supported by a resource guide.

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By and for: Community-Led Alternatives to Punishment

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Nneka Payne, CHOOSE 180

Christina Umali, CHOOSE 180

ABSTRACT

CHOOSE 180 is an organization led by and for individuals impacted by school pushout, violence, and the criminal legal system. We partner with courts and schools to offer a community centered alternative to punitive approaches to harm, engaging young people in goal setting activities and connecting them with the resources needed to thrive. Because we are embedded deeply within the community we serve, we are best equipped to build trust, promote accountability, and support youth in achieving their goals.

Our work operates in three pillars of transformation: individual service, facilitated by lived experience experts; community care for families and loved ones impacted by incarceration and violence; and systems change, where we partner with prosecutors, schools, and other institutions to invest in alternatives to punishment.

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Cultivating Resilience in Youth through Creative Expression: Strategies, Practices, and Implications

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Steffani Fletcher, Hope at Hand

Stephanie Stephens, Keys to Literacy

ABSTRACT

Research indicates that creative expression plays a pivotal role in fostering resilience by providing avenues for self-expression, emotional processing, and social connection. In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how creative expression can serve as a powerful tool for fostering resilience in youth. Through a series of hands-on activities, discussions, and reflective exercises, attendees will explore the transformative power of creative expression in enhancing resilience in youth populations. By the end of the session, participants will leave with a deeper understanding of the transformative potential of creative expression in promoting youth resilience, along with practical tools and resources for immediate implementation.

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Establishing and Maintaining Community Partnerships

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Tynetta Brown, Cook County Juvenile Temporary Detention Center

ABSTRACT

We all know that programming is very vital in a detention setting, there is a need for services that deal with behaviors, family, development, mental health, legal and etc. The list can actually go on and on. With these 3 learning objectives I will discussing how:

- To find and thoroughly vet the community agencies
- Explain the screening processes; i.e. PREA, CANTS and LEADS, application
- How to continue partnerships and discontinue if needed

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Behavior Management in Juvenile Justice Facilities: Token Economy, Feedback, and Data-based Decision Making

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Daniel Sheridan, Department of Youth Service
Ashley Anderson, Department of Youth Service, Auburn University

ABSTRACT

Under the guise of preserving safety at both the individual and societal level, juvenile residential treatment facilities (JRTFs) may use coercive procedures to manage problem behavior exhibited by justice-involved adolescents (JIAs). These techniques can be harmful and do not meet the critical needs of JIAs. By contrast, if JRTFs provide an environment that fosters skill development and utilizes rehabilitative practices this may mitigate occurrences of problem behavior and meet the unique needs of youth. One method used to increase desirable behavior and reduce challenging behavior is the contingency management system (CMS). The CMS consists of a large-scale token economy that includes data collection for JIAs behavior, specific time periods for facilitating positive interactions between residents and staff, and a feedback mechanism to assist residents with self-management of problem behavior and skill acquisition. Importantly, the data collected through the token economy may offer clinicians the ability to identify periods (e.g. days of the week, time of day) when (a) problem behavior is most likely to occur, and (b) unstructured time can be utilized for skill-building activities. Therefore, data collection and analyses of behavior can allow clinicians and administrators within JRTFs to allocate resources strategically to prevent and respond to challenging behavior effectively. This workshop aims to provide an overview of the CMS components as developed and implemented by Board Certified and Licensed Behavior Analysts to inform evidenced-based treatment decisions for one JRTF. Identify the components of a contingency management system.

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An Examination of Literacy Assessments Used in Juvenile Correctional Research: Practical Implications

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

David Houchins, Georgia State University

Kris Varjas, Georgia State University

ABSTRACT

Long-term juvenile correctional facility (JCF) personnel and researchers use a variety of assessments to determine the literacy abilities and needs of youth. Yet, little is known about which assessments are most appropriate for youth in JCF. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss findings from a systematic literature review of literacy assessments used in JCF. Recent advancements in computerized literacy assessment instrumentation will also be discussed. Details will be provided on how to select literacy assessments based on their quality, usability, and feasibility. Participants will be given an opportunity to discuss the pros and cons of existing literacy assessments within the realities of the JCF context. Emphasis will be on how literacy assessments are used at intake and in the English Language Arts classrooms to make instructional decisions. Implications for policymakers, administrators, classroom teachers, and researchers will be discussed.

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Huntington Learning Center Supports At-Risk Youth with Publicly Funded, Evidence Based Educational Interventions

Poster | Thursday, October 31st

Kristen Dench, Huntington Learning Center

ABSTRACT

Huntington Learning Center, the nation's oldest supplemental education and tutoring company, is mission driven to provide students with the best education possible. For nearly 50 years, we have helped youth with academic challenges of all kinds to achieve their best potential through scientific, evidence-based methods and curricula. With public funding, we help students to build foundational skills, while developing confidence and motivation for long term success, leading to better youth, family and community outcomes.

CORRESPONDENCE

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